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AN HOUR  
WITH  
DELARTE



ANNA  
MORGAN











"Let my sorrow  
plead for me"









# AN HOUR WITH DELSARTE

## A Study of Expression

BY

ANNA MORGAN

*Grace is the appropriate relation of the persons acting to the action*

LODGE'S WINCKELMANN

Illustrated by

ROSE MUELLER SPRAGUE AND MARIAN REYNOLDS

BOSTON 1889

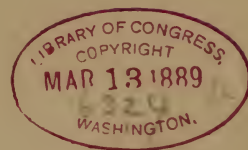
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TO  
MY PUPILS

WHO HAVE KINDLY POSED FOR THE ILLUSTRATIONS OF  
THESE PAGES

AND WHOSE ENTHUSIASM AND DEVOTION HAVE SUSTAINED  
AND ENCOURAGED ME IN MY WORK

*This Book*

IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

CHICAGO, Jan. 1, 1889.





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# AN HOUR WITH DELSARTE

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## I.

### INTRODUCTORY.

“ **I**T is every one's duty to look as well as possible ” is the feminine plea for a pretty dress, and the masculine excuse for an overcoat an inch shorter than the one worn the previous season; and if the dress be but ordered from a Parisian modiste, and the coat from a London tailor, they are worn with full confidence that nothing has been left undone to render the personal appearance all that could be desired. To be sure, their attention is frequently called to their faulty walk and imperfect carriage; but criticism is at once disarmed as they reply, with a toss of the head, “ Oh, I know it, but I can't help it, that's been in our family for years; my father carried himself that way, and it's only natural, you see, that I should do the same.” And the listener is prone to add, “ It's a wonder you don't eat with your knife, just because your grandfather did.”

What man or woman cannot recall from earliest childhood the maternal reminder, "Handsome is as handsome does," after the anxious inquiry, "How do I look, Mamma?" In fact, there never was a time when charm of manner was not considered above personal adornment; but with the advancement of the age has come the demand for something more than mere unmeaning grace.

To François Delsarte, more than to any other man, is due the credit of opening our eyes to the possibility of adding strength and expression to our movements, as well as grace and ease. His opponents have unwittingly done much to heighten public interest in his teachings; their scoffing has only served to whet curiosity and bring the subject of the æsthetic cultivation of the body into equal prominence with kindred arts. Hitherto the subject of physical culture has suggested only the gymnasium, with visions of Indian clubs, dumb-bells, and various other violent exercises for the development of muscle; but, thanks to the genius of Delsarte, we are in possession of means whereby we may obtain muscular strength, but not at the expense of flexibility, which is the basis of grace. He has given us a perfect method by which we may not only obtain freedom and elasticity of action, but one which adds force and meaning to our every movement. It frees the body from all restrictions, and renders it as it should be, — subservient to its master, the will.

It should be the training of every child from its cradle, and then there would be no bias of birth or custom to overcome in later years.

The purpose of this little book is to popularize this study by freeing it from the technical phraseology usually employed in treating the subject, and while endeavoring to interest the trained intellect, to present it in a manner comprehensible to the average mind. A suggestion to the intelligent is enough to convey the idea; but unless the mind possesses the attributes of taste and judgment, a living teacher is necessary to the execution of the plan.

Except in rare instances, printed directions for practice are found to be valueless, because of their constant misinterpretation. Equally disastrous are the consequences of taking pattern or modelling after an incompetent instructor; and unless the pupil is able to discriminate between the genuine and the counterfeit article, he is almost certain to suffer from the effects of incorrect training. The best test of the student's permanent and practical gain is the readiness with which he clothes the idea in his own language, his ability to recognize it in whatever form it may be presented, and practically to apply it.

This, experience has shown, is the only conclusive evidence of progress, and that this progress may be the more rapid, the memory should not at first be taxed with a

burden of scientific facts; merely the fundamental principles at the base of the art should be learned and their application understood. The pupil's attention should be directed to the study of himself as the first step to a knowledge of others, and an assistance to him in observing nature and studying art. In this way he learns to analyze the movements of his body and intelligently to interpret and classify them.

If in the succeeding chapters we have presented the ideas which Delsarte has evolved, in words which all may understand, and from which the reader may form a practical acquaintance with the subject, the object of our work will have been accomplished. And if in this endeavor it should be objected by some that we have been over-explicit at times, we can only say, in justification of our course, that we would rather be criticised on this score than to be misunderstood.



## II.

## IMPORTANCE OF CORRECT BEARING.

HAS it ever occurred to us that we are constantly creating impressions by our unconscious expressions, and in consequence are possibly being judged sickly, weak, conceited, vain, or vulgar? People form their estimates of our character, not necessarily through our language, for perhaps they have never heard us speak, nor through the expression of our faces alone, but through the bearing of our entire bodies.

Which of us has not accurately determined traits of character in persons with whom we have never exchanged a word, merely from the poise or carriage of their bodies? This is not to be wondered at when we consider that the body is but the outward symbol and development of the real or inner self.

Then, it may be asked, "How shall we hope to escape the truths of character if Nature thus inevitably stamps our minds upon our forms?" And the answer is, "Bring the outward manifestation of the impression you wish to create daily and hourly into the consciousness, and it will soon

become second nature, and will take the place of the unattractive and consequently undesirable appearance." "Must we all sit alike?" I hear a bright little girl ask the question. No, not unless you wish to imitate a row of lay figures; there is no fixed mode by which we must all either sit, stand, or walk alike.

An attitude which would be natural and becoming to one of us might appear constrained and awkward in another; but there are certain forms of action common to us all, which we take as the standard by which we measure faults and excellences.

Most of us have habits acquired or inherited which, measured by this standard, are not correct. A judicious teacher, instead of obliging all his pupils to obey a fixed rule of expression, will consider and provide for their individual requirements just as the competent physician prescribes for the various ailments of his respective patients. Quinine is no doubt a valuable medicine; but were a doctor to administer it to all of his patients it would be no more absurd than the manner in which the art of expression has frequently been treated.

An easy and correct bearing is the first essential, — the one which was intended for you by Nature, before you were deformed by habit or custom. As no two of us are constructed exactly alike in any particular, either of mind,



FIG. 1. — A DEPLORABLE FAULT.





temperament, or physique, it must follow that our faults and excellences will partake of this dissimilarity.

One of the most deplorable faults of bearing is produced by giving an undue prominence to the abdomen, and is emphasized by carrying the hands directly over it (see Fig. 1). Observation need not be confined to the lower classes for this glaring fault; one would have no difficulty in finding it in the higher grades of society, where it is unpardonable.

An attitude which mars the appearance and damages the health is where the chest is habitually passive, finally becoming hollow (see Fig. 2). This attitude, while often induced by a delicate constitution and weak lungs, is no doubt frequently the cause of debilitated breathing; it suggests ill-health, timidity, and helplessness. Children having this habit are vaguely directed to "Straighten up;" nine times out of ten they mechanically raise the shoulders, thereby shortening the neck and giving a deformed appearance to the upper part of the body (see Fig. 3).

Two forms of bearing which one frequently observes, and which are certainly not attractive, are the habitual attitudes of arrogance and self-conceit: the first is produced by throwing the weight on the back leg and carrying the shoulders upward and backward (see Fig. 4); the second by a conspicuous presentation of the chest, which asks without words,

"Do you know who I am?" (see Fig. 5). It is desirable that we should cultivate an attractive habit of bearing, that the impressions we create may be agreeable ones: substitute the correct bearing clearly and regularly in place of the false one, which will thus disappear "ere we are aware."

It is an art to assert one's self, make one's presence felt, without seeming officious; and the few who succeed inevitably become conspicuous ornaments of society. The first step toward obtaining this desirable result is to cultivate an appearance of bodily repose. Do not confound bodily repose with mental sluggishness. One is not necessarily stupid because his arms and head are not flying in all directions.

A natural poise is shown when one stands with one foot slightly in advance of the other, the weight resting easily on the balls of the feet (see Fig. 6). When activity begins the attitude changes; as you speak there is a transition of the weight of the body to the advanced foot.

If the body is properly poised, the arms will naturally take care of themselves, and will fall easily in front of the hips. There is no mistake a teacher could be guilty of which would be more inexcusable than that of giving directions for the use of the hands and arms without first correcting all imperfections of carriage or bearing.



FIG. 2.—DEPRESSED OR HOLLOW CHEST.



## III.

## PLEA FOR FLEXIBILITY.

“HOW beautifully you perform!” said I one day to a pianist; and she replied, “Yes, but my performing, beautiful as it appears, represents many years of patient practice under skilful masters; I have given five hours a day for several years to preliminary practice alone.” If this be true of an art, the exercise of which requires trained fingers merely, with how much more force does it apply to one in which the entire body is concerned!

The lack of training in art is most apparent when there is the greatest absence of flexibility, which is the basis of freedom, and is essential to grace in expression. We have seen the enormities of physical bearing which vices of habit and custom have entailed upon us, and the necessity we are under of removing them before we are able to conform to a standard of natural grace.

In other words, we must free the body from the stiffness of individuality by yielding it up to the claims of universality. We must break down error before we can build up truth. This object is attained in physical training by

surrendering the body to the discipline of an æsthetical gymnastic drilling.

Delsarte's inventive genius has furnished us a series of mechanical exercises which subject all the joints and muscles to a flexing or freeing process, which is the first step toward restoring them to the pliancy of unconscious freedom. They destroy that unbending muscular rigidity largely imposed by conventionality, and infuse an air of elastic independence, — so fundamental an element in a graceful carriage. They correct all faults of negligent personal habit, and overcome hereditary tendencies which sometimes, if unchecked, result in grave consequences to health. These are among the purposes of Delsarte's scheme of mechanical movements.

As every part of the body is concerned in expression, it should be uniformly cultivated throughout. The custom, therefore, among vocalists of training the voice to the neglect of the other agents of expression is no less absurd than were the preparations of the immature dramatic student, who took a course of reading lessons, a pair of top-boots, and a sword, and went upon the stage.

Public entertainers, like pianists and concert singers, whose professions do not call into active practice more than one set of muscles, are very apt to overlook their shortcomings in the matter of personal bearing, until unpleasantly reminded





FIG. 3. — SHOULDERS ELEVATED.



of their reality by a painful sense of consciousness when the moment for appearing arrives. Thus the effect of many an otherwise artistic effort has been sadly marred and sometimes utterly ruined through lack of that complacent ease born of confidence in a becoming manner.

A general cultivation of the entire body should form the preliminary training or groundwork upon which to build up a special education for any art, and the resulting flexibility and control of all the muscles is of the greatest assistance in subjugating the set of muscles expressly exercised in a particular pursuit.

As the judicious use of these exercises is productive of immeasurable good, so on the other hand is their improper practice harmful in the extreme. Unskilful exponents of Delsarte, mistaking the purpose of these mechanical movements, have done much to bring his labors into disrepute. Their pupils usually make ridiculous exhibitions of themselves by the agonizing sinuosities which they throw into their gestures, and the airy nothingness which pervades all their movements. Good taste would promptly reject such antics as a silly travesty of nature. But the cause of Delsarte has suffered so much from this misapprehension, that the mention of his name recalls to many people only the spectacle of a group of expressionless girls languidly waving their arms in the air.

A young lady, applying to me one day for instruction, assured me that her father was "just disgusted with those weak Delsarte movements; he wants me to take up something with some strength to it." Here Delsarte was condemned on account of the limited vision of his interpreter.

The end of art is to conceal art, and the study of Delsarte is a means to this end. It seeks to provide a plan of self-cultivation in harmony with the lines of natural impulse; to assist, not to improve upon, nature is its aim.

The eminent actor and elocutionist, Mr. James E. Murdoch, in his admirable work, "A Plea for Spoken Language," ably bears out this idea; he says:—

"We would have true, natural expression idealized into its highest possibilities of beauty, grace, and power; to illustrate: All the strong passions of the mind communicate themselves, as we have seen, so suddenly and irresistibly to the body that vehement gesticulations and impassioned tones are the result. These tones and gesticulations are, no doubt, natural, but they are not always the most perfect or graceful expressions of nature. . . . Nature may readily run into deformity; and it must be the purpose of art and cultivation to conceal or remove all deformities, for art is called in, not to pervert, but to refine and exalt nature.

Nature, it is true, will accomplish much without art in all human operations, and art will be of no avail without nature; but it is only by a combination of the two that we can produce perfection in anything that is the workmanship of man."



FIG. 4. — ARROGANCE, DEFIANCE.





## IV.

## FRANÇOIS DELSARTE.

WE have already stated that Delsarte has done more than any other man to create a general interest in the subject of the æsthetic cultivation of the body as a means of expression; and before proceeding farther with an account of his discoveries and inventions, we desire to record a few of the many interesting episodes with which the life of this illustrious artist was crowded. He was born November 11, 1811, at Solesme, France, and died in Paris July 20, 1871. Like most men of genius, his boyhood years were full of privation and suffering. His father, who was a physician, possessed a very proud and imperious nature, which was greatly irritated by his extreme poverty; in consequence of which he treated Delsarte's mother, who was a woman of rare abilities, with such injustice and cruelty that she was finally compelled to abandon him and flee with her two sons to Paris, where she died before she could make her talents available. François's little brother soon followed his mother, dying of starvation and cold in his brother's arms.

Thus we find Delsarte in 1821, a little boy of ten years, in the utmost destitution and entirely alone in the world. One night he was found in the street by a rag-picker, who took pity on him and carried him to his miserable home. During the next two years, while in this man's employ, he developed his grand passion for music, and invented a system of musical notation, in order to preserve the airs which delighted him when listening to the bands of music and itinerant singers which he encountered in the streets.

At thirteen years of age Delsarte was discovered in the garden of the Tuileries by Bambini, an eminent professor of music, who found him writing figures in the sand. When questioned as to the significance of the marks, he replied that he was writing down the music which was being played in the garden. Amazed, Bambini inquired who had taught him the process; he replied, "Nobody, sir; I found it out myself."

"Thus in the dust of Paris were first written the elements of a system destined to regenerate art." Bambini took the boy home, and instructed him until the pupil became greater than the master. At fourteen Delsarte's talents secured him admission to the Conservatory, where, by observation of Nature and a careful study of cause and effect, he soon developed a style of his own which was radically different from



FIG. 5. — CONCEIT, SELF-ESTEEM.



those of his teachers, at whose hands he received nothing but discouragement.

Delsarte was led to follow the promptings of his own genius through the praises of Malibran and Adolphe Nourrit, who predicted that he would be a great artist. His indomitable will and perseverance at last secured him an interview with the director of the Opéra Comique, who, upon seeing Delsarte's ragged clothes, declined even to give him the office of call-boy, the only position then vacant, to which Delsarte replied, "Monsieur, if my clothes are poor, my art is genuine; I am prepared to fill the position of *premier sujet* among your singers." The manager finally consented to hear him sing, which resulted in his offering Delsarte an engagement for a year at a salary of ten thousand francs. The failure of his voice compelled him to retire from the lyric stage in 1834, four years from the time of having made his first appearance before an audience, which was electrified.

Delsarte possessed great courtliness of manner, in which there was nothing of self-assertion; his form was massive, and his eye brilliant; and when he sang, his exquisite voice, "aided in effect by those imperial gestures of which he had already discovered the secret," found its way to every heart.

Upon his retirement from the stage Delsarte decided to

devote himself to perfecting a system which should give a solid foundation to the art of expression, and one which should recognize the limitations, no less than the possibilities, of the individual. He obtained a perfect knowledge of the uses and capabilities of the muscles through a conscientious study of anatomy and physiology, and he spared no pains or labor to perfect the system which was his special life work, and on which his fame rests.

Delsarte's natural modesty kept him withdrawn from the glare of publicity, and during life he was little known outside of his immediate circle, in which were included men and women of rank and fortune, and members of the reigning families of Europe, who sought his instruction as a means of rendering them personally more attractive for the position which they occupied in social life. The names of Rachel, Sontag, Macready, Madeleine Brohan, and Pasca are among Delsarte's professional pupils; while equally distinguished names, including that of Père Hyacinthe, are among the number to whom he gave instruction in pulpit oratory.

Born in poverty, early deprived of home influences and maternal love, Delsarte's genius carried him, after nine years of unremitting labor, to a brief career before an admiring public, to which, after his retirement, owing to a firm religious conviction, he would never return. He died at the age of sixty years, comparatively unknown, even in his own city.





FIG. 6. — NATURAL POISE.



Delsarte's friends have patiently borne the ridicule which has been heaped upon him, knowing and believing that his greatness will shine brighter and brighter in future years because the principles which he evolved are founded upon truth, and "Truth will abide."

Inquiries regarding Delsarte and his wonderful system are by no means confined to those directly interested in the subject; one hears the question asked everywhere, — on the street, in the parlor, and in public places. It has been so variously and incorrectly answered that people have formed very ludicrous notions on the subject; some foolishly believing that the "Delsarte System" was intended to teach us to sit, walk, and move about after a new fashion, and other notions, too absurd to have been dreamt of in Delsarte's philosophy, or in any other.

Now, then, laying aside all those follies and divesting the subject of its technical dress, Delsartism, in brief, is a phase of nature idealized, that is, freed from those features which would tend to direct the mind from a contemplation of its beauties, the preservation of which is primarily the object of all art. Delsarte's death in the year 1871 prevented, it is said, a visit which he intended making to this country for the purpose of introducing the subject of his studies here. It is greatly to be deplored that this visit was never made, as it might have been the occasion of his leaving some

indisputable record of his works; but it is a lamentable fact that he died without having committed to durable form any complete account of his extraordinary labors in behalf of æsthetic science.

In view of this fact we are greatly indebted to such of Delsarte's pupils as were in possession of his manuscripts, and to others who have made careful research into the subject, for having made a conscientious endeavor to give us a correct arrangement of Delsarte's system of expression as formulated by himself.

Without wishing to criticise these various published accounts, to our mind many of Delsarte's formulas, as presented, seem impracticable, because of the scientific terminology in which they are framed, and deal, beside, with details too minute, and touch considerations too remote, to be successfully applied to study or exemplified in practice, however important they may be to the theorist, the sage, or the scientist.

V.

PHILOSOPHY OF DELSARTE'S SYSTEM.

IT was Delsarte's great discovery that the human soul, in its covering of flesh called the body, moves in obedience to universal law; that its efforts to manifest itself to the outer world are restricted to the conditions imposed by space, time, and motion,—the three great elements by which its activities are inevitably environed; that the soul must express itself *in space, through time, by motion*,—in other words, every agent of expression must appear in space by means of motion, and requires time in which to manifest itself; and finally, that the force by which this motion is produced is supplied by the soul, or psychic principle, and is of three different kinds, each corresponding to the three states of the being which it translates in expression.

Thus, when this force causes motion outward, or from the body, it is said to proceed from our physical nature, and is called Vital; when this force causes motion inward, or toward the body, it is said to proceed from our intellectual nature, and is called Mental; and when this force is

poised, — that is, when it neither causes motion from nor toward the body, but tends to hold the body in poise, — it is said to proceed from the emotional nature, and is called Emotive.

In every human being one of these three natures, or states of the being, as they are called, is predominant, while the other two are tributary or subordinate; and the degree of this predominance of the one state, and the order of importance of the other two, are the root and source of all the various types and traits in mankind.

For example, a man of intellectual habit, or one in whom the mental is predominant, will reveal his nature through subjective motion, or motion which is mainly toward the body. On the contrary, in a man in whom the vital nature leads, the motion will be chiefly objective, or from the body; and if the emotional nature rules, the motion will be neither directly subjective nor objective, but may partake of either, according to the extent to which the emotional nature is invaded by the mental or the vital.

Again, every act of life has its rise in one of these three states of the being, and traces its motion and motive to one of them. This predominant state is said to lead, while the other two assist or follow the former, and the resulting action corresponds to the state from whence it proceeds.

Thus we find the seat of sensation in the physical nature, which is also the source of vitality, and reveals itself through outward or objective motion. The seat of sentiment is in the emotive nature, which is the source of the highest emotions of the soul; it reveals itself through centred or poised motion.

The seat of consciousness is in the mental nature, which is the source of thought, and is revealed through subjective or inward motion. It should be borne in mind here that this division of the soul into separate states is purely an arbitrary distinction, and is made for the purpose of facilitating analytical study. It is a matter of convenience merely, and has no existence in fact.

The testimony of the eminent psychologist, Thomas Carlyle, is adduced in support of this position: —

“We talk of faculties as if they were distinct things, separable; as if a man had intellect, imagination, fancy, etc., as he has hands, feet, and arms. Then again we hear of a man's ‘intellectual nature’ and of his ‘moral nature’ as if these again were divisible, and existed apart. Necessities of language do prescribe such forms of utterance, but words ought not to harden into things for us. We ought to know withal, and to keep forever in mind, that these divisions are at bottom but names; that man's spiritual nature, the vital force that dwells within him, is essentially one and indivisible.

“All that a man does is physiognomical of him; you may see





able to illustrate the logic of the science than to serve a practical purpose for general study.

The application of this threefold principle, which is the basis of Delsarte's philosophy, is considered under appropriate headings in the subsequent chapters.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It has been the object in these chapters to discuss the study of expression from its most practical and least theoretical side. To those, however, who desire to enter into a more philosophical investigation of the question, with a view to grasping the relations of the physical to the metaphysical man, "The Synthetic Philosophy of Expression," by Moses True Brown, is heartily recommended as being the most comprehensive, logical, and exhaustive consideration of the subject in present use.

## VI.

## PRACTICAL LESSON ON EXPRESSION.

I N the first chapter we insisted that the only way to be certain the pupil comprehends the subject, and that the result desired has been obtained, is to demand from him the idea in his own words. To farther illustrate our plan, we will undertake to conduct a practical lesson on the subject of "Expression" before an average class of pupils.

"Good morning, young ladies and gentlemen. In our previous lessons I have done most of the talking, in order to give you a general idea of the requirements of the study. That I may discover how much thinking you have done, I shall now reverse matters, and you must give me the information. We will begin by asking Miss Mary to tell us what we are here to study."

Mary's face radiates sunshine as she readily attempts to reply. She hesitates, however, and then, on taking second thought, the sunshine disappears behind a cloud.

"Why, it's to study — oh, it's to study — oh, it's — why, it's to — oh, I know, but I can't just tell."

"Ah, but you have heard it said that if you can't tell, you don't know."

"Well, then," returns Miss Mary, courageously resuming the attack, "it's to study elocution."

"Then you think we are here merely to learn how to read?"

"Oh, I know that isn't right," admits the young lady, "but I can't exactly express it."

"Miss G., perhaps you can assist us in finding out what we are here to study?"

Miss G. proceeds with more caution: "Well, I think it is to learn the art of acting."

"Very true, but that is not all, besides, we are not all studying for the stage. Tell me in one word what we are here to study."

"Delsarte!" triumphantly shouts little Miss A.

"Miss A. says 'Delsarte,' but she forgets that Delsarte is a means, not an end. Now, then, to what end are we studying?"

"It's to learn dramatic expression," ventures thoughtful Miss L.

"Very true, indeed;" and all the others regard Miss L. with little glances of envy. "But why say 'dramatic expression'?" The glances of envy are withdrawn. "Tell me in one word the end and object of our studies."

"Expression," choruses the class.

"Right! We are here to master the art of expression.

Now, then, let us emblazon that word in large letters here on the blackboard, so that it will stand out conspicuously from all other words, and so that we may keep it constantly before our minds, — that the great end and object of our studies is expression; not dramatic expression, not facial expression, but expression only, — expression, pure and simple. Now, then, I want some one to tell me what we understand by expression. Miss S., what do you understand by the term ‘expression’?”

Miss S. looks as if she occupied a position of extreme peril, and fears to hazard a reply. The others show a fellow-sympathy for her distress. Presently she falters, “Ahem! it’s — er — ah — it’s — er, well, I’m sure I don’t know, — if it is n’t the expression of our faces.”

“Is expression confined then to our faces? Give me a comprehensive reply in your own choice of language that will answer the question, ‘What is expression?’ You tell us, Miss K.”

“Why, expression,” urges Miss K., desperately, “shows how we feel, how we act, how we look.”

“But you are a little mixed; our feelings are a subject of expression, and our looks and actions are modes of expression. I want you to reply to me as to a stranger who seeks enlightenment on the subject. Mr. R., what do you say expression is?”

"Well," observes Mr. R., learnedly, "I think expression is the sum of all our actions."

"A very ingenious, but scarcely an instructive, reply. There is doubtless a great deal expressed in the sum total of our actions, but that does not help us to understand what the term 'expression' signifies in the sense we are using it."

"It means actions," exclaims some one, thinking to profit by the brevity of the first definition; "Feeling," says another, seizing on the same mental thread; "The expression of emotion," says a third; and then some one calls out, as if by inspiration, "It is a sign of the state of the mind."

"Ah, there we have it. 'A sign of the state of the mind,' with a slight alteration, and we are out of the difficulty." And at this, each one feverishly begins to formulate a reply based on this idea.

"The outward expression of the mind," suggests one; "The sign of thought," submits another; "The manifestation of life," essays a third; and a fourth, "The outward sign of human nature."

"Very good, indeed; each of your answers embodies the idea. Now, out of these various definitions let us form one that will exactly state the meaning in the fewest, simplest words; and remember that words mean just what we under-

stand by them and nothing more. Let us say then that expression is a sign of the being; and while I am writing the words on the blackboard opposite the word 'expression,' please turn them over in your minds so that we may agree exactly as to our understanding of them. Now, then, we will proceed one step farther, and I will ask you what meaning you attach to the word 'being.' Mr. A., what do you understand by the word?"

Having now become warmed to the subject, the timid have put by their reserve, and the doubtful have grown bold; so Mr. A. promptly answers, "I think 'being' means the soul." "No, the mind," corrects another, in his ardor forgetting his courtesy. "Life," "Vitality," "Existence," suggest various others in the same breath.

"Again, you are each of you right; but again, for the purpose of agreeing in our understanding, let us unite on a common definition that will convey to each of us the same meaning. Remembering now what we said about words, that they mean just what we understand by them, let us take Webster's definition of the word 'being:' 'Being is that which exists in any way, whether it be material or spiritual.' Now, then, we have said that expression is a sign of the being. I will ask you, Mr. B., to exemplify or apply that definition in your own person by some action."







Mr. B. reflects an instant, during an impressive silence, and then admits that he is unable to do so, at the same time shifting in his seat and crossing his legs with embarrassment in his manner.

"Why did you shift so in your seat and cross your legs when you replied?"

"Well," he continues, more confused than ever, "I scarcely know; I suppose it's because I was a little nervous."

"Exactly, because you were a little nervous; you are not in the habit, I see, of analyzing these signs of your being; you answered my question unconsciously. The crossing of your legs and the shifting about in your chair plainly revealed or expressed the state of your feelings, and was therefore a sign of your being. Now tell me what you understand by expression, Mr. B."

Promptly comes the reply: "Expression shows the condition or state of the feelings."

"Precisely. And the feelings are a part of what, Miss V.?"

She hesitates.

"Can any one tell?"

"The being," comes from several.

"And the mind is a part of what?"

"The soul, — no, no, the being."

"And the soul?"

"The being."

"Is there any attribute of man, mental, emotive, or vital, material or spiritual, that is not a part of the being?"

"None."

"If I prick you with a pin and you cry out, what does that mean, Miss V.?"

"It means that I am hurt."

"True, but does your cry express anything?"

"It expresses pain."

"And the act of crying is the sign of what?"

"A sign of the being."

"If I hand you a problem in arithmetic and ask you to solve it, and in return you speak a number, what might we call your answer, Mr. A.?"

"An expression of the mind."

"Which is a sign of what?"

"A sign of the being."

"If I were suddenly to bring you intelligence of some terrible calamity to your family, and you were to faint at hearing the news, what would the act of fainting signify or express, Miss L.?"

"It would express grief or sorrow."

"Which is a sign of what?"

"The being."

"If I prick the skin of a dead person, there would be no response. Why, Miss F.?"

"Because the person is dead."

"Why is the person dead?"

An awkward pause; then, after a moment of profound deliberation, "Because the spirit has fled."

"And the spirit is what?"

"The being."

"But we said a moment since that the body was a part of the being; in the dead person we have the body still, yet you say the being is gone."

"Oh, yes, I know now; the spirit is a part of the being."

"Exactly; then the body is essential to the being as well as the soul?"

"Yes."

"And if I prick the skin of a dead person, why will he make no sign; that is, express nothing?"

"Because the body without the soul is not a being."

"Precisely, because the being no longer exists. Now let us write this on the blackboard, following the last definition, and our lesson reads: —

EXPRESSION { The Sign of the Being.  
The Being is Soul and Body."

## VII.

## VITAL DIVISION.

IT will be remembered that Delsarte divided the body into three grand divisions, to correspond with the vital, mental, and emotive states of our being, because each seemed to select one of these as its principal agent of expression as if by preference; and that he also subdivided these grand divisions into tracts or zones from which and to which the hand and arm in gesture seemed to move naturally.

In the grand divisions he selected the limbs as the principal agents of the vital nature, because they disclose the greatest power of action and physical strength. They are the levers which sustain motion, and among the more animal races, the lower the grade of intelligence, the higher the degree of muscular development attained in the exercise of these members. They are simply the manifestation of vital life. As man becomes civilized and refined there is a greater freedom in the movements of the arms and legs, showing a blending of the mental and emotional natures with the vital; and they perform a varied service

in connection with the head and torso in the function of expression.

In the divisions of the leg, Delsarte designates the upper leg, or thigh, as vital because the impelling force which gives impulse to the leg in walking is first felt here. His reason for ascribing to the lower leg the office of revealing the emotional nature is admirably shown in the act of kneeling, when we would express a subordination of self to the will of others in supplication, entreaty, appeal, reverence, and obedience.

No argument is required to prove even to the satisfaction of the most sceptical that the foot is the direct agent of the mental nature. How often we detect a person's nervous mental state through the unconscious tapping of the foot upon the floor! Our intention to advance or retreat is gestured by the feet. We will endeavor to show that the ruling condition or sentiment of the individual is indicated in the position of the feet, as evinced in the following illustrations drawn from familiar attitudes.

If the feet are separated, one slightly in advance of the other, the weight resting on the balls of the feet, it indicates repose or poise of the being. Emotive nature predominates (see Fig. 6).

If there is a transition of the weight to the front of the foot, the motion being outward or from the centre, we con-



clude that it is impelled from the vital nature; if, on the other hand, the transition of the weight is toward the back of the foot, inward or toward the centre, it shows that the mental nature directs the action. If the weight of the body rests mainly upon the back leg, and the knee of the advanced leg is bent, it indicates reserved force, thought, reflection. It shows that the mind of the individual rules; that he is a thinker. Mental nature predominates.

If the feet are slightly separated and pointing directly forward, it indicates rusticity, or a feeble condition, as a child learning to walk. Vital nature predominates.

If the attitude is not natural, but has been assumed, it indicates that the inferior stands before the superior in the person of the valet, or the soldier. Emotive nature active.

If the legs are wide apart, we are led to infer that the person is either in a state of fatigue or intoxication, or that he is familiarly vulgar. The attitude denotes also bragging, pomposity, and bluster; vital nature predominating.

If the condition is that of prostration, the weight will be upon the back leg, the knee bent, the forward leg free; vital nature prominent.

When the weight of the body rests entirely upon the back foot, and both legs are straight, it shows a state of

" I wonder  
what is love ! "

1915





antagonism, defiance, or daring; vital nature predominating (see Fig. 4).

If the feet are separated and the weight is borne equally on both, the posture indicates indecision, doubt, or deliberation: "Shall I go or stay, advance or retreat?" Mental nature predominating.

If the forward knee is bent, it shows attention or intention, and reveals a vehement or passionate tendency; either vital or emotive nature predominating.

When the weight rests upon one foot and the knee is straight, the other leg free and the foot resting on its side, the attitude indicates a listening state or one of eager suspense; equal predominance of the mental and emotive.

When a person is in a state of exaltation, the weight will rest upon the advanced foot, the back leg entirely free and the knee straight; the degree of feeling will determine whether the back foot rests fully upon the ground or is raised; in this, emotive nature predominates.

These attitudes of the feet and legs, revealing the mental, vital, and emotional conditions, should be carefully considered, as well as the innumerable variations arising from the diversity of sentiments and emotions. They should be analyzed and practically applied as necessity or occasion may require.

The arm, like the leg, reveals the activity of the vital

nature, and, as an agent of expression, has three centres of motion: that of the shoulder, which as a subdivision Delsarte designates as vital because the force from the brain seems to flow into the upper arm first, thus moving all other parts from this centre. While the action of the shoulders is vital in significance, they are also moved by our higher emotions; in consequence Delsarte called the shoulder a thermometer or indicator of sensibility or passion, leaving the face to determine whether the action springs from love or hate.

The emotive nature is revealed through the second centre at the elbow. When in repose it indicates ease, modesty, and self-possession. When turned outward from the body it indicates conceit, tenderness, self-assertion; when turned inward toward the body it indicates weakness, humility, subordination of self. The third centre in the arm reveals the mental nature through the motion of the wrist, which is the direct agent of the hand; it directs the hand, presents it, and therefore requires great cultivation in order to render it supple, free, and strong.

The attitudes of the arms, like those of the legs, reveal the ruling state in the being or individual.

There is no part of the human body, unless we except the face, more significant in its actions than that of the hand; for while "the eye may be trained to deceive, the

features may be schooled to assume a stolid indifference under circumstances of mental emotion, the impulsive pressure or involuntary movement of the hand frequently betrays the truth. The motions of the hand add force to argument, and often speak a silent language of their own, portraying fear, astonishment, or grief beyond the power of words to convey."

To the hand are assigned various offices which it is impossible for the face to express. "It can handle the object, sketch it, and project it in form into space." We draw, paint, play, work, and write with the hand; we define, indicate, affirm, deny, mould, detect, conceal, reveal, surrender, hold, accept, reject, inquire, acquire, support, assail, caress, and protect. All the knowledge of the deaf and dumb is acquired through a language which is revealed by the hand.

Each of the three states of being is disclosed through the hand; it lends itself to whichever state predominates in activity, and, like the leg and arm, indicates the condition of the being. For instance, if the fingers are folded in the palm with the thumb upright at the side of the first finger, it indicates a condition of self-possession and power; if, instead of resting at the side, the thumb is pressed tightly across the second joints of the closed fingers, resolution or struggle is indicated.

If the fingers and thumb are crooked at the first joint, toward centre of palm, it indicates a condition of exasperation; if the hand is nearly closed it is that of convulsion. Animated attention is shown by the open hand, fingers straight, thumb slightly spread. If the hand is prone it signifies earnestness; if the fingers are energized it indicates passion and vehemence. Trust and tenderness are revealed through the open palm with the ends of the fingers slightly curved.



## VIII.

## MENTAL DIVISION.

IN the grand divisions of the body the head is the special agent of the mental nature; it contains the brain, the organ of the mind, the development of which is shown in the formation of the cranium and face, which, taken in connection with manner, are a faithful reflex of the mind. Says Addison, "Every passion gives a particular cast to the countenance, and is apt to discover itself in some feature or other. I have seen an eye curse for half an hour together, and an eyebrow call a man scoundrel."

A full, high forehead, with well-proportioned features, contrasted with a low, receding brow and projecting cheekbones, outwardly mark the extremes between intellectual superiority and mental density.

The highest and lowest grades of intelligence in mankind closely approximate in appearance these external distinctions of feature; and as we said of the limbs in the chapter on the vital division of the body, that they attain the greatest perfection of physical strength among

the inferior races of men, so in the highly sensitive organisms of the more advanced races, as the quality of the material becomes finer and the quantity is lessened, there is a gradual development toward the perfection of flexible strength.

Muscular flexibility is found in its greatest perfection among intellectual people; and as the intellectual fibre becomes coarse in quality, so the muscles lose their delicacy, and as the muscles gain in mere physical force, they lose in temperamental or flexible strength.

As in the subdivisions of the limbs the invasions of the vital nature by the mental and emotive are shown, so, too, the invasions of the mental nature by the emotive and vital natures are illustrated by the subdivisions of the head into three zones or tracts, each corresponding to a qualified or complex state of one of the great principles of the being. Thus the region of the head about the mouth and jaws is selected to express a phase of the vital nature, the region of the cheeks and nose answering to a similar purpose for the emotive nature; while the eyes and forehead are the mental centre of the mental division, and therefore the most expressive agency of the mental nature in the body.

The mind is revealed most directly through the eye, which translates with marvellous fidelity the nicest shades

"Tisn't pleasant  
to have no place  
to sleep"





of thought and feeling. An active or a sluggish mental habit is revealed through the eye by the brightness or dulness of that organ.

A brow corrugated with seams and wrinkles is the external evidence of a life of thought or much care, just as the brow innocent of a line, over blank, staring eyes, betokens a vacuous mind.

The emotional nature is expressed in the face through the blush and pallor of the cheeks, and in the nose through the dilation and contraction of the nostrils in the various forms of excitability and sensibility. The nostrils dilate in anger, passionate resentment, and the like, while contempt and cruelty contract them.

Like the eyes and forehead, the construction or shape of the nose and cheeks is partly indicative of the character of the individual; thus, a nose cast in an heroic or graceful mould is rarely found disassociated with some admirable qualities of mind or heart, and a pinched, peaked, or flat nose nearly always accompanies a mean, peevish, or crafty nature.

So, too, the blending of the vital nature with the mental, as shown in the shape of the mouth, jaws, and upper neck, has its share in determining character. Heavy, sensuous lips, square, massive jaws, and a thick neck leave little for conjecture as to the prevailing traits of the per-

son possessing them. From this to the thin, compressed lips, bony jaws, and pointed chin of hardness and cruelty, there is every grade of natural impulse, from the most vicious to the most virtuous.

The mouth is the seat of the organs of voice and taste, both of which are vital in expression; but it is also concerned in the production of articulate speech,—a direct agent of the mental nature. The lips readily lend themselves to whichever state of the being leads the activities. They are parted in astonishment, suspense, and awe; they are bloodless and compressed in the heat of vital passions, and they are pursed and drawn in sympathy with mental endeavor.

Enthusiasts and visionary people habitually carry their heads elevated, whereas the tendency of grave and thoughtful habits is to lower the head and eye. Thus the attitude of the head frequently denotes the disposition of the individual.

## IX.

## EMOTIVE DIVISION.

AS the function of the limbs in the divisions of the body is vital, and that of the head mental, so the emotive nature has its base of operations in the torso, or trunk, and is the seat of the passions and higher emotions. In the subdivisions of the torso the region of the lungs appears to be the seat of the mental nature; the heart, in which centre the affections, is the dwelling-place of the emotive nature; and the vital nature lodges in the abdomen, which is the headquarters of the appetites. These subdivisions of the torso are the points for the arrival and departure of gestures of the hand and arm, which thus indicate the principle of being predominating in expression. When the breast heaves and swells under the stimulus of some noble impulse we know that the mental has invaded the emotive nature, and stirred the being to the projection of some lofty purpose; and the open hand is laid upon the breast to show that the individual is committed to a worthy end. In moments of the highest exaltation the whole being is



said to be poised, when head, heart, and hand are in perfect accord, and are united in the pursuit of one great object. At such times the individual is capable of the highest in his nature. The eye lights up, the nostrils dilate, the color comes and goes, the chest heaves, the limbs move with unwonted ease and grace, and the whole man becomes grander, as indeed he really is; for at such moments he is incapable of petty things.

If the gesture seeks the heart region, or emotional division, the affections predominate; when the vital nature rules, the gestures seek the abdomen, as this is the seat of the appetites and grosser passions. In the second chapter of this book we call attention to the significance which the undue prominence of either of these divisions gives to the carriage of the body as revealing the nature of the individual. Egotistical and conceited people express their predominating characteristic through the prominence of the chest; as we have previously stated, many people have the abominable habit of protruding the abdomen.

In a proper carriage or bearing of the torso, the heart region will be prominent, the abdomen contracted, and the shoulders flexible and free.

We cannot better conclude this brief consideration of the divisions of the body than by quoting the physiognomist Lavater, in support of Delsarte's theory: "These three

states of the soul do not lodge in separate apartments of the body, but co-exist in every part, and form by their combination one whole; yet it is true that each of these principles has its particular place of residence in the body, where it in preference manifests and exerts itself."

## X.

## DELSARTE'S NINE LAWS OF GESTURE.

ALL who have carefully and thoughtfully perused the preceding chapters will have no difficulty in determining the fact that we are enabled accurately to convey our thoughts and feelings through the medium of the body in the form of gestures or motion, and that it is possible to trace every movement of the body back to the sensation, thought, or emotion which created it.

We are perhaps apt to consider the voice as the most important agent of expression; and while its power is not to be denied, when we realize what lasting impressions are conveyed through the expression of the eye and hand alone, how they magnetize, influence, interest, and persuade, we are forced to admit that "Actions speak louder than words," and that gesture is superior to speech. Says Addison, "A man's speech is much more easily disguised than his countenance."

According to his exponents, Delsarte formulated nine laws of gesture. First, the Law of Motion, which we have already described as the centre of his system. Motion is force

"Look, there'  
ho, ho, ho' "





expending itself. Delsarte was the first to apply the three modes of motion to the three states of the being. Motion corresponding to the vital state moves outward from the centre; motion which corresponds to the mental state moves inward toward the centre; while the emotive state is manifested through either outward or inward motions, or that which is balanced or poised according to the nature of the emotion.

Delsarte's second law is that of Velocity: "The velocity of any agent is in proportion to the mass moved and the force moving." That is to say, a weighty idea or grave emotion requires deliberate or slow gestures moving through large space, while thoughts and emotions of a lighter character are gestured by short, rapid movements. The same is true of the voice; grave, deep tones accompany grand subjects, while lighter tones denote less weighty feelings.

The third law is that of Direction and Extension. All gestures must have direction: vital gestures are generally projected forward from the body or lengthwise, mental gestures are directed above or pointed below, while emotional gestures are thrown out laterally; and the extension of gesture is shown in the degree of our self-surrender or the completeness of our giving up to the state by which we are dominated. It should be borne in mind that these

definitions apply as well to the inner being and explain the direction or tendency and bent of thought.

Reaction is Delsarte's fourth law: "Every extreme of emotion tends to react to its opposite. Concentric states tend to explosion, and explosion to prostration." The principle is shown in the rebounding of a ball thrown against a hard wall; it returns to the hand which gave it impetus with its force diminished only by the resistance of gravitation. This ball may be said to represent the human soul when the vital nature is supremely dominant.

This state of the being is outwardly shown by great physical exertion, and is immediately followed by intense calm, betokening the relaxed state of the mind, which is the natural consequence of undue excitement. This law is frequently illustrated in the passion of a child which has long been chafing under the restrictions of maternal discipline. The child has been forbidden some form of youthful pastime, which in the maternal instinct seemed harmful; the little fellow feels that he has been hardly used, and broods over his trouble, at first sullenly, but afterward more demonstratively. He thinks, "What a cruel mother I have!" this is succeeded by angry resentment manifested in kicks and half-stifled murmurs of discontent, which having no effect, the long pent-up feelings find their climax in a flood of passionate tears. After this outburst tired nature comes to



the rescue, and the reaction is seen as the infant rebel sobs himself to sleep.

The Law of Form may be defined as the figure or shape by which matter is presented to the sight. As applied to gesture, all motion describes certain shapes or forms in space. Gestures which describe straight lines or forms are said to be vital; those taking a circular form are emotional; while gestures marking broken outlines are mental.

The Law of Personality is that which marks a man's individuality and distinguishes him from other men. Personality is the result of heredity and culture. We work upon the material received at birth from our ancestors, striving to efface or emphasize its peculiarities accordingly as they are advantageous or detrimental to us; the result at manhood, colored by experience, is personality. It is that by which we recognize a friend by his walk, a mother by the inflections of her voice as she speaks to her child, the words of a favorite author by the style of the composition.

Delsarte's Law of Opposition: "When two limbs follow the same direction, they cannot be simultaneous without injury to the law of opposition; therefore direct movements should be successive and opposite movements simultaneous." The law of opposition in gesture has for its mechanical or physical basis the laws of equilibrium and

gravity. A vertical line directly through the body standing erect and perfectly poised will mark the centre of gravity. Any departure of the body from this right line in any direction must be compensated for by an equal portion of the body in the opposite direction, else equilibrium cannot be maintained. Equilibrium is one of the elements of physical grace; and while there may be equilibrium without grace, there can be no grace without equilibrium; so, in gesturing, this law of compensation or balance must be preserved in the interests of grace. A gesture by one member of the body demands a compensating gesture by another member in opposition.

If we gesture with the arm, the head moves in opposition. If we step forward, the head follows the limb; the body being equal to the head and limb opposes them in compensation.

The Law of Priority or Sequence of gesture is the order of succession in which the agents of expression act. "Impression always precedes expression; we must have before we can give, and give in the order of having," — which is equivalent to saying, We must have an idea before we can express one.

Generally speaking, the vital nature first asserts itself in gesture, then follows the emotional nature, and the mental nature is last to act; but, as Delsarte says, "The

will lends itself to whichever side of the being is in action," and that side will lead the sequence in gesture.

In the order of priority the eye reveals impressions first, next the face responds, then the hand and other members of the body, and, lastly, articulate speech.

Delsarte is reported to have said that "Rhythm is the vibration or swing of matter through equal spaces and in equal times." It is the regular pulsation or beat of motion corresponding to the throb or wave of emotion; motion is rhythmic just as waves are undulating; it is the character or shape of motion. In speech it is the successive rise and fall of the voice, as in the modulation and the cadence of the tones in reading. In gesture it is the consecutive inflections of the limbs from joint to joint in the movements of the body.

## XI.

## GESTURE.

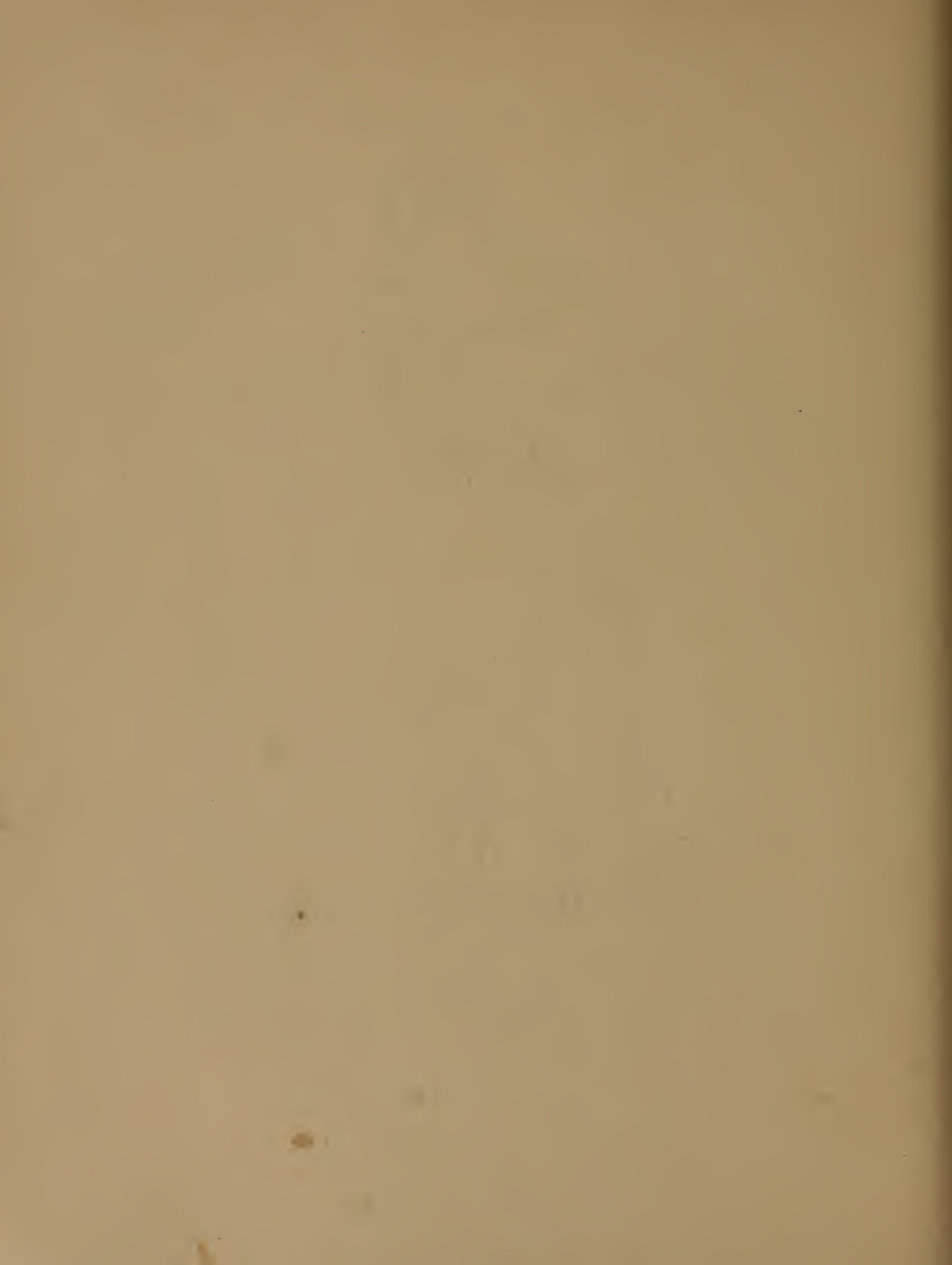
GESTURE is the immediate revelation of the being. The most evanescent flashes of thought and temperament are first and immediately revealed in gesture. The quality of his gesture is the quality of the individual, and the touchstone to the character of the man. His speech can be attuned to the occasion; but he betrays himself in the quick surprises of involuntary gesture, — in the sudden tremor of the lip, the startled turn of the head, the dropping of the jaw, the spasmodic clutch of the hand, the blush and pallor of the cheeks, and the flashing and quailing of that sensitive mirror, the eye. And *apropos* of the sudden flushing and paling of the cheeks, the French philosopher, Descartes, observes that while the will may have some control over the muscles, it has none over the blood.

Gesture is the language of nature, and is comprehensible to people of every tongue; whereas their different forms of speech must be laboriously learned before they can be employed or understood. The most pacific overtures, when



"Now you  
stop!"

RMS



couched in words, might be misinterpreted by a foreigner, but a conciliatory movement of the hand is readily appreciated by any race or condition of men.

The character or type of the gestures of different races varies according to the temperaments of the people, but the nature or essence of gesture is everywhere the same; thus, the warm-blooded races of Southern Europe and Asia make quick, impulsive gestures, in keeping with the activity of their temperaments; but among the phlegmatic peoples of the North, the gestures are more deliberate and less volatile in kind. With the Anglo-Saxon races, on the other hand, where a greater evenness of temperament prevails, the gestures are an equable blending of the other two; and all the many classes of men, with their infinite diversity of characteristic movements, are but variations of these fundamental types. Hence, different men express the same idea, thought, sentiment, or passion differently, the manner of each being modified by experience, habit, disposition, etc. But all men have the same general attributes, distinguishable by the special peculiarities of each; so it follows that certain gestures are common to all men to express particular emotions, colored only by the individuality of the person.

For example, profound grief will give to every face a melancholy or lugubrious effect; but a grief that would



awaken in one person a perfect agony of woe, would be expressed in a more self-contained nature by an occasional sigh and a heavy look in the eye, though the degree of grief were the same in each case. In the same way, a feeling of great surprise is shown in every face by an expansion of feature, accompanied by a staring look in the eyes; but a surprise that would have no more effect on some people than to cause a slight lifting of the eyebrows, would provoke in others a violent start, throwing up of both hands, and a settled gape, amounting in appearance almost to consternation; yet the surprise may be no more sincerely felt in the one case than in the other. But it is through these forms of action or gesture that we learn the secrets of another's nature.

Of him who has such perfect control of himself that he makes little or no demonstration over a circumstance which excites another to much show of feeling, we say that he is a man of the world and has experienced much, or that his nature is cold and unresponsive, or that he is hypocritical and masks his true feelings for his own ends, or that he is cultivated and politely suppresses them; forming our own judgment each time not upon this circumstance alone, but considered in connection with other facts similarly obtained; and by this subtile reasoning we arrive at an estimate of character. It is the complex nature which makes the

least show of feeling, and the simple one which is the most demonstrative.

All gesture may be classified conformably with its source as subjective and objective: it may be called objective when it refers to and arises from external causes or conditions; it may be called subjective when it is the direct expression of a purely subjective or mental operation. The simple gesture made in pointing out a familiar object in a miscellaneous collection is objective, because it arises from an external cause; but the involuntary action of raising the hand to the brow in an effort of the memory is subjective, because it is a reflection of some state of the mind.

Gestures of the objective class are more frequently seen in children than those of the subjective kind, because the mind of childhood is more susceptible of impressions from without; and it is not until the exercise of the faculties of reasoning, judgment, etc., begins that certain crude, subjective gestures are seen, betokening the immaturity of these qualities. As these functions become fixed, however, and their true value determined, the revelatory gestures take on a riper fitness and a settled precision of form in perfect keeping with the now advanced development of the mind.

Who is not familiar with the comical grimaces and absurd antics of a child when called upon to unravel some

tangled mental knot? But in maturer years this same child will reveal a proportionately difficult mental encounter with perhaps a drawing together of the brows, a pursing of the lips, a tapping of the fingers, or by some equally mild form of gesture, betraying the working of the practised intellect accustomed to this kind of mental gymnastics.

Through these illustrations it is the purpose to bring forcibly home to the learner the manifest absurdity of prescribing fixed gestures to express particular ideas, than which no more ridiculous notion has ever prevailed, even in connection with this ludicrously treated study. Our minds are as different as our faces; we do not think alike nor talk alike; then why should we act or walk alike? No two of us are exactly alike in any particular; then, in just so much as we are unlike, the difference should appear in all we do.

A girl of fifteen will not express herself in anything like a man of fifty; nor will any two girls of fifteen, or men of fifty, express the same ideas, using precisely the same words, gestures, or facial expression; each will show his difference of temperament, habit, disposition, heredity, and experience from those of each of the others, and these and other differences of character will color all he does.

All gesture, to be natural, must be unconscious, or seem to be so; the reason that studied gestures are often stiff,

embarrassed, and self-conscious is that they have not been sufficiently studied. Says Pope:—

“A little learning is a dangerous thing;  
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring.”

So a little jaunt into the realms of expression only serves to show the learner what he lacks, without putting him into possession of it; there must be no half-heartedness about his efforts, he must plunge boldly into the stream and ford it to the source. So thoroughly must he be imbued with the subject that he will seem to have appropriated it to himself,—made it, in fact, second nature. Then all self-consciousness will disappear, per force of circumstances. For the special study of gesture the student is referred to Bacon's “Manual of Gestures,” which is a most admirable simplification of Austin's “Chironomia,” the most important work as yet produced on the subject of gesture.

## XII.

## THE VOICE.—READING.

DELSARTE classifies the voice, as he does the other agents of expression, into three divisions, each corresponding to one of the three states of the being. Accordingly the voice, the mere sound, is vital; modulated sound, or tone, is emotive; and articulate speech is mental.

Again, the pitch of the voice is suggestive of these three states of the being. In this classification Delsarte defines the chest voice as the expression of the vital or sensitive life, the medium voice as the expression of sentiment and the emotive nature, and the head voice as the correspondence of the mental side of the being.

The head voice is used in expressing purely mental conditions, like the inward gestures; and the medium or middle voice is expressive of emotional conditions, like those gestures which are neither outward nor inward, but serve as the poise or balance between the two.

These distinctions are by no means definitive; but as in the divisions of the other agents, the vital or chest voice

"Alas,  
too late!"







is invaded, and in turn invades the emotive or middle voice, and the same with the head or mental voice.

By this blending and merging of the basal divisions the same complexity is observable in voice as in the case of gesture. As there is little or no variation in the cry of the animal, so there is not much in the tones of elementary or savage natures among men; and flexibility of the voice is never found disassociated with intelligence, because it is the external sign of intellectuality.

The head tone, or high voice, is heard in the weighing and balancing of mental problems. The head voice reaches its highest state of pliancy among the most enlightened peoples.

The chest voice is heard when the animal side of our nature is dominant; in the vital passions,—hate, anger, etc.,—if the physical nature overbalances the mental, the chest voice is more frequently employed than either of the others, the head voice being often very weak.

The medium voice is heard when neither the mental nor the vital side of the being is predominant, or when some condition of the emotive nature is poised. "Every state of the mind," says Dr. Rush, "has its corresponding vocal signs in some of the varied forms of pitch, force, time, and quality;" and the slightest inflection of the voice has its corresponding mental equivalent, just as the inflections of gesture have.

The importance of the voice as an agent of expression depends, as in the case of the other agents, upon the degree of its flexible strength and the readiness with which it accommodates itself to the passing phases of thought and feeling; hence the necessity for cultivating the voice to its greatest pliancy of modulation.

It is not the purpose here to enter upon a discussion of the voice in any particular sense; as the subject is of too much moment, if it were not too extensive, to admit of anything but the most general treatment. For a more thorough investigation the student is recommended to a careful study of Dr. James Rush's exhaustive consideration of the subject in his "Philosophy of the Human Voice." But it is possible, even in the space of a brief chapter, to throw out suggestions which may awaken the learner to the importance of the subject and to the necessity for an understanding of the organs which are concerned in the production of voice if he would make intelligent use of his vocal powers.

For example, the well-known resemblance in the physiological formation of the organs of speech to the principle upon which wind instruments of music are constructed is of service to the student in helping him to understand the process of voice production.

The lungs and diaphragm may be likened to the bellows

or pumping power of a church organ; the windpipe stands for the pipes and tubes, and the larynx for the reeds. In the production of voice the lungs furnish the motor element, the larynx the vibrating element, and the mouth the resonant element, and these three elements are essential to the creation of all sound.

Primarily, the correct use of the voice is dependent on the proper exercise of these organs, a free and unforced habit of inspiration, and a sustained power of expiration in the management of the breath, together with a clear and distinct enunciation, without too great preciseness of articulation. The distinguished public reader and instructor, Mr. George Riddle, assures us that he never gives his pupils breathing exercises at the outset of their studies, as their value is not at first understood. If his pupils are unable to breathe properly he gives them the Ghost Scene from Hamlet to read; and the futility of attempting the grave, round periods of the ghost's speeches without diaphragmatic breathing strikes the learner at once, and the necessity for breathing lessons is clearly established.

Good reading is a recommendation, just as good manners are a passport; and there is never a time when the lack of the one or the other may not throw the decision against us in some project on which we have set our hopes.

Of course the first essential in a reader, from an objective standpoint, is the command of his voice in order that he may be able to meet the demands made upon it in a lengthy vocal effort; and in these days of frequent gatherings, public and private, scarcely any one may feel himself secure in being unprepared for an occasion when his shortcomings in this respect may prove a source of mortification and annoyance.

How pathetic sometimes is the spectacle of the person, unaccustomed to "that sort of thing," who is suddenly called upon to read or speak in public! Who will forget the picture of his constrained and timid manner, or the effect of his weak voice and monotonous tones addressed to a friendly face in the front row, leaving the rest of the house in painful uncertainty as to what it was all about! Or, on the other hand, how absurd was the way he shouted to cover up his embarrassment!

By the pompous professor we are told that all we have to do in order to read well is to be natural; but what is more natural, if the reader has any sensibility, than that he should appear unnatural before an audience at first? It is his very fidelity to nature that causes the mischief. It is not until he has learned to quell or subjugate certain natural instincts, which rob him for the time of his powers, that he is able to present the appearance of

spontaneity and naturalness. For example, timidity deprives him of self-possession, and he appears stupid when he is only frightened.

Ignorance of the quality of his voice causes him to misjudge its strength; it fails him, and thus ruins an effort for which, in other respects, he may have been thoroughly equipped. And so, in a hundred ways, he must cast himself into the relentless school of experience unless fortified by previous preparatory study.

## XIII.

## TEACHERS. — EXERCISES FOR PRACTICE.

THAT "poets are born, not made" is not a whit more certain than that teachers should be; but, alas! too many are manufactured after they are born. The calling of the instructor is a special vocation, requiring a specific fitness equal in degree to that of the artist or the orator, and the professor of the inculcatory art must be as truly called to his work and must enter upon it with as much heart-felt devotion as does the professor of any other art.

The representative of any craft who finds more drudgery than pleasure in its practice may feel assured, other things being equal, that he is out of his proper sphere; and he is no true teacher who does not find his tutorship an ever-changing source of delight.

Droning out laboriously acquired knowledge by the hour to foggy-minded youth is but dull work truly; and if that were the end of the teacher's occupation one could readily sympathize with the complaint of the country pedagogue, who

"I wonder if he  
loves her\_much"







kept school only because school kept him. But to the genuine preceptor the task of implanting the seeds of knowledge and seeing them fructify is a boon beside which all material recompense seems poor. He teaches because he loves to teach; he revels in his work. It is a joy to him to make his thought your thought.

It is his mission to diffuse knowledge. He loves to watch the play of the unfledged fancy as it plumes its wings for intellectual flight. He carefully studies his pupil and notes his peculiarities, and then adapts his discourse and his discipline to suit the temperament and disposition of his charge. He checks the froward and inspires the timid, and the industrious he rewards, but to each and all he is impartially and uncompromisingly honest and sincere; for this, he knows, is the greatest justice, the greatest charity, and the greatest kindness.

This master is broad in his own views and tolerant of the views of others. Whatever his private opinions may be, he does not allow them to prejudice his consideration of the opinion of others; and thus his information is ever unbiassed and therefore reliable. He has a system in his work, but it is a liberal system, and enables him, without trespassing, to cull from every field the choicest fruits of thought; thus he is progressive, and his labors are ever brightened by the unfolding of new possibilities.

We have already stated that we have little faith in the efficacy of printed directions for guidance in the practice of exercises, because they are almost invariably misinterpreted and misused by the student. A living interpreter is required to expound the principles upon which they are based, in order that extravagance in their use may be avoided, on the one hand, and that they may not fail of their purpose through a want of thoroughness in their application, on the other. Still, as this book would be incomplete without some reference to the character and quality of these exercises, the writer desires to outline the course which she has found most serviceable in her own practice. They are presented more with a view of suggesting the various forms of gymnastic drill, than with any intention of enumerating the exercises possible under the system, which may be extended indefinitely, according to the ingenuity of the instructor.

1. Examine pupils individually, and point out faulty habits of carriage and bearing; suggest corrections by reference to illustrations in the second chapter.

2. Consider the carriage of each in his walk, and point out inelegancies and other defects, such, for example, as the fault of walking with a bobbing movement of the body, wabbling from side to side, or carrying the feet with the toes pointing inward, etc. Do not attempt any radical

"Alas poor soul!  
what grief is thine?"





alteration of natural tendencies which are inherent in and characteristic of the individuals.

A Greek writer has declared that "a man's mind is in his walk." Gracefulness in walking requires that the body be carried erect without stiffness, that the legs swing easily from the hip-joints, and that the toes be turned slightly outward and carried on a level with the whole foot. In turning to retrace one's steps, or in making short turns, one should pivot lightly on the balls of the feet, not take three or four steps in a half circle, as many do.

The bearing and carriage of the body having been considered in this general way, we proceed to examine the members of the body in detail, beginning with the hand. Extend your arms forward with the palms down or prone, energize and move stiffly up and down; now surrender the hands at the wrist, shake them as before. The object is to take the mind out of the hands, to let the effort of the will cease at the wrists. The sensation of freedom or flexibility is obtained by repeatedly energizing the hand and then relaxing or surrendering it. Now, shake the hands laterally from side to side; forget them, let them go; remember that you have arms, but no hands, for the time being. Now turn the hands with the palms facing each other, give them up as before, and shake them back and forth, letting the energy cease at the wrist. Now, repeat

the movement with the palms upward; imagine that you are shaking drops of water from the tips of your fingers. Now, the rotary movement; turn the hand round and round from right to left; now, reverse the movement and turn them from left to right. Next, hold the hands facing each other, the sides downward, and shake them freely as you would in a gesture of threatening. Next, rest your forearm on the arm of your chair; now cut the energy off at the wrist. We must obtain perfect flexibility of this agent, which in some people extends to the fingers, giving them the same freedom as at the wrist.

These movements we call flexing or freeing exercises, because they render flexible or supple the agent thus treated, and free it from the bias of customary forms of action. By this means the way is opened for the introduction of unaccustomed forms.

From the hands we proceed step by step to each division of the limbs and body, subjecting each to this freeing and flexing process, until the entire body becomes readily responsive to the slightest calls of the will.

Raise the arms and extend them laterally with the motion made in swimming. Free the fore-arms, letting the energy cease at the elbow; with the arms in this position agitate the upper arm up and down, forward and backward, and rotarily, or with a rotary motion, letting the fore-arm



swing as if dead. This exercise frees the arms from the elbows down, and gives flexibility and suppleness to the muscles of the upper arm.

Standing in a position of perfect ease, allow the arms to hang naturally at the sides; now, energize or stiffen the arms and bring them slowly together with the backs of the hands meeting just before the hips at the lowest altitude; holding them thus for an instant, relax and let them fall back to their usual position. Again, energize the arms and carry them forward and upward, holding them extended at full length to a horizontal position before the chest; relax and let them fall into place as before. Repeat the movement, carrying the arms this time to a position just above or on a level with the eyes; relax as before, letting them drop lifelessly into place.

Again, stiffen the arms to a rigid tension, and holding them at full length, carry them up sidewise until they meet, the backs of the hands together, directly over the head. Agitate the hands as in the preceding exercises for the hands, relax and drop them. Again this movement, carrying the arms above the head, but as far back as possible, and finally relax and allow them to fall into place.

Standing in the same position, elevate the shoulders as much as possible; relax them, and allowing the arms to

hang lifelessly, freely agitate the rest of the body. Carry the shoulders forward as much as possible, neither raising nor depressing them; relax them, and agitate the body as before. Depress or slightly droop the shoulders, then slowly carry them backward and upward, and finally downward, expanding the chest to its fullest extent; relax and agitate the body as before. Rotate the shoulders forward several times, then backward; then swing the arms round and round, letting them revolve in their sockets.

These exercises, besides freeing the muscles of the chest and shoulders and relieving them of stiffness and angularity, will, if perseveringly practised, materially expand and enlarge the chest, thus promoting the healthy action of the lungs.

Sitting, holding the head in its normal position midway between the shoulders, neither raised nor depressed, allow it gradually to droop forward until it loses balance and falls inertly upon the chest. Returning it to its normal position, allow it to droop backward until it falls upon the neck. Returning again to normal poise, allow the head to fall first to the right, then, repeating the movement, let it fall to the left. Now, with a rotary motion allow the head to roll freely on the shoulders, first to the right, then, reversing, let it roll to the left. The object of these exercises, it will be readily seen, is to give perfect freedom

to the movements of the head by imparting flexibility to the muscles of the neck; this object is not fairly accomplished until you are able to simulate through the head the passive pliancy of one in a dead faint or in a state of unconsciousness.

Sitting erect in your chair, allow the head and shoulders to droop forward, breaking the trunk at the first joint of the chest, but holding the waist rigid. Beginning in the same position again, allow the head to fall backward, drawing the shoulders with it, but maintaining rigidity of the waist as before.

Again, droop the head to the right, allowing it to elevate the left and depress the right shoulder by the force of its own weight, still holding the waist immovable; repeat the movement to the left; now, turn the head and shoulders round with a rotary motion which alternately raises and depresses the shoulders as they follow the movement of the head. Still sitting erect, rotate the upper body on the hip joints, letting the motion flow sinuously through the joints of the spine and ribs; reverse the action, turning in the opposite direction.

Rise in your places, and standing at perfect ease, allow the upper body to fall lifelessly forward, arresting the action at the waist line; repeat the action, falling backward; again, falling to the right and then to the left.

Now, letting the upper body fall forward, arresting the action at the waist line as before, rotate the inert trunk to the right by means of the hip joints and muscles; reverse the movement, turning to the left.

Resume your seats, and lifting the right foot from the floor, agitate it freely, as in the exercises for the hand; rotate the foot at the ankle to the right and to the left; repeat this exercise with the left foot.

Again, standing up, agitate the right leg from the knee, as in the exercises for the arm; now with a rotary motion to the right, and reversing to the left. Throw the limb forward, imitating the pawing of the horse; repeat these with the left foot and leg.

Standing on some elevated position, — a footstool, or on the edge of a step or platform, — swing the whole leg loosely from the hip joint; in lieu of the rotary motion, which is impossible, throw the right leg about the left, letting it dangle loosely from the hip; repeat this exercise with the left leg.

Allow the eyelids to fall and lower jaw to drop.

Having freed the various joints and hinges of the body from their enclosures of stiffness and angularity, and given flexibility to the muscles at the same time, let us now turn our attention to building up those muscles which from disuse or bodily ailment have become weakened, and observe

"Oh, my  
Goodness me!"





that by taking up the work of strengthening the body in this order, after the freeing and flexing process rather than before, we avoid emphasizing and confirming, as it were, the faults which we have just been at so much pains to overcome.

Stand with the heels together, the toes pointing at right angles, and rise slowly and steadily on the toes to the highest point attainable with an even balance, and down in the same manner, repeating the exercise until the movement can be accomplished almost imperceptibly. Next, pivot on the balls of the feet from right to left, reverse and repeat over and over several times.

With the feet in the same position, keeping the body erect, bend the knees as far as possible without lifting the heels from the floor or losing the balance. To give elasticity to the lower limbs, stand in position, the heels a few inches apart, the toes pointing outward at right angles, with a springy, dancing movement of the body, take a step forward and back to place, first with the right foot, then with the left, springing slightly on the balls of the feet as in waltzing and marking time rhythmically,—one, two, forward and back to place on the right foot; three, four, forward and back to place on the left; repeating the movement backwards,—one, two, backward and forward to place on the right foot; three, four, backward and for-



ward to place on the left foot; continue the movement to the right and to the left, pointing the toes of the foot on which the step is taken obliquely from the body, and marking time as before.

Although Delsarte made the study of the human voice his chiefest concern, the loss of his own voice having quickened his perception in respect to that organ, it is none the less a deplorable fact that little remains to us of his authentic achievements in its behalf.

For a specific study of the voice, therefore, the student is referred to Mr. James E. Murdoch's "Analytic Elocution," which is a simplified interpretation of "The Philosophy of the Voice" by Dr. James Rush, and contains, besides, many notes and observations gathered during Mr. Murdoch's long and varied experience as actor, reader, and teacher.

We give below the fundamental breathing exercises which should be considered in connection with the flexing and freeing forms. There are three forms of breathing in which all language, from simple narration to the most violent burst of passion, is presented.

In a simple statement of fact the breath flows from the organs in a gentle, steady stream.

*First Breathing Exercise.*—Stand in an easy position, the weight resting on the balls of the feet, the arms hang-

ing loosely at full length in the back, the fingers lightly caught together; in this position fill the lungs by deep, slow, and full respiration. After a short pause, during which the breath is retained, part the lips and let the breath pass out in a gentle, steady whisper of the word "he;" lips moderately opened, corners drawn back. Endeavor to economize the breath in this exercise as much as possible, giving it out as slowly and steadily as you can.

In any emotional utterance the physical organism is stimulated to greater exertion and the breath rushes from the organs.

*Second Breathing Exercise.*—Fill the lungs as before, and then expel the breath in a forcible whispered breathing of the syllable "hah;" the mouth more open, lips slightly rounded.

In extremely passionate expression the breath seems to burst into the outer air impelled by a powerful effort of the vocal mechanism.

*Third Breathing Exercise.*—After a full inspiration expel the air suddenly in a violent whispered utterance of the syllable "halt;" the mouth must be widely opened and the whisper coming from well back in the throat.

Give the above exercises with vocal sound.

An excellent breathing exercise consists in filling the lungs and then sounding the long vowel ā, holding it on

a level line of pitch as long as it is round and does not become vibratory; then take ē, ī, ō, and ū in the same manner; this is an excellent vocal gymnastic exercise; practice on it gives a steady control of the diaphragm and makes the tones of the voice round, firm, and clear.

## XIV.

## EXERCISES FOR HARMONIC POISE.

IT is a rule in all harmonic movements that the head shall follow in the direction in which the weight of the body is thrown; that is, in the direction taken by the leg which bears the weight of the body; at the same time the trunk moves in opposition. This rule is founded on the laws of equilibrium and sustained by the canons of grace.

*Exercise 1.* Stand with the feet slightly apart, toes nearly on a line, the weight resting equally on both feet; slowly sway the body forward until its weight rests entirely on the balls of the feet, but without lifting the heels from the floor; in the same manner sway backward as far as possible with the weight entirely on the heels. Avoid overbalancing.

*Exercise 2.* With the feet in the same position, weight resting equally on both, withdraw the weight gradually from the left leg, giving it entirely to the right, the head following the direction of the weight and the trunk taking the opposite direction; now reverse the movement, grad-

ually withdrawing the weight from the right leg, give it over to the left, the head and trunk moving in opposition as before.

*Exercise 3.* Stand with the right foot advanced so that the head is about on a line with the toes of the left, the weight equally borne by each; gradually transfer the weight to the advanced leg until the weight is entirely borne by that member, the head following the direction of the weight, and the trunk, or torso, moving in opposition as before. Repeat this exercise with the left foot advanced.

Let the student try moving the head and trunk both in the direction of the advanced leg, and the loss of equilibrium, or balance, which will result is the most convincing proof of the mechanical as well as the æsthetical value of the oppositions.

*Exercise 4.* Stand with one foot advanced as before, the weight equally sustained by each foot, rotate the entire body at the ankles, the waist describing the direction taken and the head following in opposition. In all of these exercises the movements must be sinuous, not angular, and the transitions must be accomplished with something of the subtilty of feline grace, the movement touching successively every joint and articulation in the course over which it travels.



"Now  
is the time!"





*Exercise 5.* Sit in a chair with the spinal articulations lying easily against the back of the chair, chest and shoulders relaxed, but not drooping, with the body in a purely passive attitude; move the trunk, or torso, forward, first energizing at the waist as the objective point, the energy extending successively to the chest, shoulders, and head, the latter, which sympathizes with the weight, following the trunk in graceful opposition, until the attitude is one of animated activity. Now reverse the movement, allowing the trunk to sink slowly back, the waist leading and the head following in opposition as before, until the first position of negative inactivity is resumed. It will be observed that with the body in this position, the spinal column describes the arc of a circle and is convex, while the breast is concave; but in the forward movement, when the body is fully animated, the position is just reversed, and the breast is convex while the back is then concave.

*Exercise 6.* Sitting in the same attitude as in beginning the last exercise, move the trunk obliquely forward to the right until the body is highly energized, then reverse the movement, allowing the trunk to return to its position of passive ease, observing in this precisely the same principle as in the last exercise. Now repeat this exercise by making the movement obliquely to the left and back; then vary it by moving directly to the right side and back, then to

the left side and back. Finally, rotate the trunk forward to the position of greatest strength and relax, returning to the inactive poise,—the waist describing a half circle forward and a half circle backward. Reverse the movement, rotating forward in the opposite direction and then back.

*Exercise 7.* Begin practising the harmonic expansion of the hand by closing the tips of the fingers in a cluster about the tips of the thumbs, the hands being held up before the breast; then with an even, regular movement expand the hands, at the same time withdrawing them in opposite directions until they are wide apart, and fully open. Now, begin slowly to close them, bringing them together at the same time until the tips of the fingers cluster about the tips of the thumbs as before. The hands before the breast in the same manner, placing the tips of the second and third fingers against the tips of the thumbs, expand the hands, separating them as before, until they are far apart and both are wide open; then return them to place with the same smooth, flowing motion. This exercise tends to educate immobile and expressionless hands to that state of lightness and pliancy which goes so far to impart a meaning and purpose to gesture.

*Exercise 8.* Referring to Chapter VII., assume successively the simple or fundamental attitudes of the body therein illustrated and described, observing in the tran-

sition from each assumption the harmonious principles described above.

A passing or transitory gesture is called an inflection; an arrested inflection is called an attitude; and an habitual attitude is called a bearing.

The hand has three sides or faces,—the palm, the back, and the edges,—and one of these is always presented in gesture. In describing the hand, Delsarte invests the palm with the office of revealing the vital nature; the back he makes the agency of the emotive nature, and in the sides he finds an agreement or accordance with the mental nature. It is the business of the hand in gesture to define, which it does with the index finger or the open hand agitated perpendicularly; to indicate, by pointing with the fore-finger, or by a toss of the hand toward the object; to assert, by throwing out one or both hands, palms supine; to affirm, by placing or slapping the fore-finger, or two fingers, or the whole hand into the palm of the other, or by slapping the hand or pounding the fist on any convenient surface, as in heated discussion.

An affirmation is an emphasized assertion; the hand denies by being raised perpendicularly, palm outward, laterally toward the one who is the object of the denial. Rejection is often a mild form of denial, and is expressed in the hand by holding it dependent from the wrist with

the back presented, and agitating it forward and back with a sort of pushing movement. Impatience is manifested by the hand in a restless tapping of the fore-finger, or the opening and closing of the fists, or a snapping of the fingers and thumb. In the act of concealment the back of the hand is shown, the palm being toward the object to be concealed; while in revealment the palm is exposed.

The hand inquires by being raised extended, palm presented, fingers and thumb slowly expanding and directed at an angle upwards. Acquiescence is shown by a slight waving apart of the hands, fingers pointing downward, palms presented. Anger is sometimes declared by the tightly clinched fists. Malicious triumph is betrayed by the feverish rubbing of the hands as in washing them; self-complacency by the soft friction of the palms.

The hand caresses by tenderly stroking or patting the object of the attention. The hand expresses the idea of moral support by being held out horizontally, palms supine. These and a great variety of mental operations are revealed in the inflections of the hand; as, for instance, the slow moving of the thumb over the tips of the fingers to denote the exercise of reflection, reasoning, and the efforts of formulating thought.

*Exercise 9.* The student is recommended to the con-

stant practice of these and of the attitudes of the hands shown in the postures described in Chapter VII., with others of his own devising ; this practice, if persistently followed, will speedily deliver the pupil from the monotony of a few habitual gestures, by imparting a variety of expressive coloring to his movements.

*Exercise 10.* Standing in a normal position, raise the right arm by means of the wrist to a level with the waist and energize it ; holding it thus before you at a slight angle with the floor, describe the figure eight, moving with a light, wavy motion of the hand, progressing to the right as far as the arm will move gracefully ; repeat this exercise with the left arm, progressing to the left, then with both arms.

*Exercise 11.* In the same position, elevate the arm by means of the wrist to a level with the shoulder and energize it, as before ; now, with the same yielding motion, as last described, outline the character eight on the opposite wall, moving to the right as before, until the space of a quadrant has been covered ; again, repeat with the left arm, then with both.

*Exercise 12.* Again, by means of the wrists elevate the arms until they are directed toward the ceiling, then energize them, and throw the outline of the figures above the head, covering a quarter circle, as before. Repeat

once more with the left arm, and then with both arms ; vary this exercise by presenting the edges of the hand and cutting the figures sidewise, instead of with the palm.

*Exercise 13.* Raise the right arm directly in front of you, wrist directing, palm down, energize on a plane just below the chest ; now move to the right, the elbow leading, letting the movement flow into the wrist and hand ; then reverse, bringing the hand back to the body, marking the articulations successively at the shoulder, elbow, and wrist as you do so, just as you would strike a broken chord of music. A common fault with stiff, awkward people is that they move not only their arms, but all parts of the body, as if it were one piece, and not composed of parts hung together by joints which, whenever the leg, waist, or arm are moved, must all speak, as it were ; repeat the above exercise with the left arm, then with both ; again practise them with the palms of the hand upward.

*Exercise 14.* Again extend the arms directly in front, wrist leading, rotate arm, the hand passive, energize, close fingers in hand, close wrist, close elbow, raise elbow horizontally on a line with the shoulders, unfold elbow, unfold wrist, unfold fingers, and finally expand and energize the entire arm ; now return to first position by closing fingers, closing wrist, closing elbow, dropping elbow, then unfold elbow, unfold wrist, unfold fingers, energize the entire arm



"Mine woes afflict  
this spirit sore."







in front, palm upward, now surrender the arm to its normal position; repeat this exercise many times, until you can close and unfold the joints of the arm freely and rapidly in any and all directions and at any altitude.

The law of harmony demands that parallel movements shall be consecutive; that is, one agent of expression leading, the others following, and that the movement of two agents in opposition shall be made simultaneously.

*Exercise 15.* The mind directs the body to move right, the right arm follows the inclination of the body, the wrist leading; next the left arm follows the right, the wrist leading; the head has simultaneously moved to the left in opposition; now reverse the movement, moving the body and arms successively and rhythmically to the left, at the same time moving the head to the right; repeat the movement obliquely to the right and then to the left, raising the arms to different altitudes.

*Exercise 16.* Bow the body at waist line; as you do so raise the arms back in opposition.

*Exercise 17.* Bow the head on the chest, simultaneously raising the arms, wrists leading; now raise the head as you lower the arms.

*Exercise 18.* Assume the attitude of vehemence, the right leg forward and strong with the knee bent; at the same time raise the left arm forward obliquely and the right

arm backward obliquely; with a slight elastic spring resume a normal position; now reverse, taking a marked step forward with the left foot, at the same time raising the right arm, wrist leading, obliquely to the right, and the left arm obliquely backward and to the left; now resume a normal poise, which is the correct position when in repose; repeat these steps over and over again until they can be taken accurately, with the arms in perfect opposition, as fast as they can be called off.

*Exercise 19.* Continue the study of the arms by considering the shoulder, which when raised indicates sensibility, or an emotion of extreme joy or hate, as must be determined by the expression of the face. Grief, prostration, or concentration droops the shoulders.

*Exercise 20.* Assume the different attitudes of the elbow; subordination of self turns the elbows in, while assertion and self-conceit turn them outward.

*Exercise 21.* Consider the attitudes of the entire arm; when in repose they fall just in front of the hips.

The arms crossed lightly on the breast indicates a spiritual resignation of the will; if they are tightly folded and raised on a level with the shoulders, it indicates suppressed passion or a concentration of vital force.

The hands resting on the hips, the elbows turned out, indicates impertinence, self-assertion, boasting; the arms

carried directly forward, hands prone, fingers widely separated and energized, the body simultaneously moving backward in opposition, is the expression of passionate explosion, which is the result of a concentration of strong feeling.

*Exercise 22.* Assume the attitude of exaltation, right leg advanced and strong, that is, bearing the entire weight simultaneously; raise the right arm with a spiral movement to the highest altitude, the fore-finger prominent; now make a transition of the weight to the left leg, simultaneously raising the left arm with a spiral movement into an attitude of vindication; the right arm will be slightly raised and to the right, hand prone.

*Exercise 23.* Kneel on the left knee, the left hand on the chest and the right arm extended in appeal; rise and kneel on the right knee, simultaneously clasping the hands in front of the chest in entreaty; rise and kneel on the left knee, at the same time extending both arms in supplication; repeat this over and over again, first on one knee and then on the other.

*Exercise 24.* We are told that "harmony was born of contrasts." We will continue our practice of the opposition between the head and arm by first raising the right arm as we lower the head on the chest; next carry the arm to the right, striking all the notes or articulations,

simultaneously carrying the head to the left; now raise the left arm as you carry the head back to normal poise midway between the shoulders; now lower the head as you cross hands upon the breast; now raise the head as you expand the arms horizontally; finally surrender the arms, letting them drop at the side in normal position; repeat the exercise, the left arm leading.

*Exercise 25.* Now we will try a more complex combination. Standing in a correct position of repose, raise the right arm and rotate it into an attitude of appeal; now energize the arm, at the same time lowering the chin as in accusation; next swing the arm over the head, the hand in the attitude of exasperation, head lowered, chin thrown forward as in cursing; next drop the hand on the back of the head, which has risen in opposition to meet it, — the attitude indicates remorse (the attitude would be strengthened if the left hand were on the chest or carried to the back of the head also); now, without separating the head and arm, allow them to fall on the chest in deep thought or grief; now raise the head and rotate to the right, which will allow the arm to fall across the chest, and you have an attitude signifying reproach; now rotate the head to the left and the arm to the right, and the attitude is that of rejection or repulsion; raise the left arm, rotate the head to a position midway between the shoulders, rotate

the arms into attitude of supplication, the body carried forward on the advanced leg; now rotate the arms until the hands are prone in an attitude of benediction as they drop to normal position, the body also settling on the back foot.

## XV.

THE HEAD, EYE, NOSE, MOUTH, AND MECHANICAL  
MOVEMENTS.

A WELL-POISED head is the fitting accompaniment of a shapely person, and usually bespeaks a well-ordered mind, and goes far besides to atone for the physical imperfections of other members, being the objective point of the line of vision and therefore most constantly under the criticism of the eye.

We admire an elastic step, a yielding curve of the pliant arm, and a supple grace in the carriage of the body; but add to these the charm of a nicely balanced head, and the picture is complete; we have the finished grace of an undoubted personal bearing.

A normal poise of the head requires that it shall be carried midway between the shoulders, neither raised nor depressed. The ruling state of the being is revealed through the various attitudes of the head. For instance, a person of a sympathetic nature who is full of trust and tenderness will habitually incline the head forward or toward the object of his esteem; while, on the contrary, a person who is cold, unsympathetic, and distrustful will



"Oh, dear, I forgot  
all about it!"



T.M.S.



habitually and naturally withdraw the head backward. Bearing in mind that motion is in obedience to the thought or emotion which created it, it will readily be seen that reflection, humility of spirit, subordination of self, and all kindred sentiments will concentrate or lower the head upon the chest; and if the sentiment be a complex one of humility, trust, and affection, we have the spiritual attitude of veneration or adoration, which is also complex in that it is first lowered and then inclined forward with an upward inflection.

In the same way the complex feelings of scrutiny and distrust will produce an attitude of suspicion, jealousy, hate, or envy, which first lowers the head and then draws it backward. All emotions of exaltation throw the head upward; if the feeling of exaltation is invaded by that of trust and resignation, it first throws the head backward and then forward with an upward inflection. If the feeling of distrust and self-assertion is mingled with that of exaltation, we have the attitude of arrogance or defiance; the head is first thrown upward and then drawn backward. The study of the attitudes of the head and those of all parts of the body, especially the various expressions of the eye, nose, and mouth, should be carefully practised before a mirror.

Most people consult their mirrors for the single purpose

of seeing their attractiveness ; we should study them for the purpose of seeing ourselves as others see us. The study of the profile view of the face and head should not be omitted : some features will bear a straight profile view ; others of a warmer nature look best with a convex exposure of the features ; still others require that the head be turned away.

#### THE EYE.

In the law of sequence or priority the eye is the first agent of expression to respond to the workings of the mind, and reveals its rest or activity. Quick, restless movements of the eye are not an indication of intellectual activity ; it is only so when the glance is observant as well as quick. Intellectual sluggishness is revealed through the slow movements of the muscles of the eyeball. Active, energetic, practical people have a direct, near glance, while speculative dreamers look far away. The muscles about the eye are the active agents of expression. "The eyeball is simply an indicator of the direction from which an impression comes or to which an impression goes."

#### THE NOSE.

When we are in a normal condition,—that is, free from any particular emotion or excitement,—the nostrils, like

the other agents of expression, are in repose. Excitement and passion dilate the nostrils; while with people who are selfish, hard, and cruel, the nostrils are contracted.

People who are aggressive in temperament manifest their natures by wrinkling the nose laterally between the eyebrows; if a feeling of cruelty is added to that of aggression, we have the expression of hate, which also contracts the nostrils. Scorn and anger also dilate the nostrils. Contempt raises the nostrils and contracts them.

The nose plays a greater part in the expression of the face than we are apt to imagine, and is consequently often overlooked.

#### THE MOUTH.

The mouth, like the nose, plays its part in expression, and corresponds with the other agents: when in repose the lips are normal or lightly closed; firmness of purpose compresses them tightly together; and if there is any additional feeling of disapproval the corners of the mouth will be depressed. Abandon and suspense slightly part the lips, while in astonishment they are completely apart.

Grief depresses the corners of the mouth, lips slightly apart; while horror parts the lips widely, corners much depressed. Joy and pleasure elevate the corners of the mouth and slightly part the lips, while approval closes

them. The expression of an otherwise attractive face is often sadly marred by the habitual drooping of the corners of the mouth ; it usually accompanies imaginary troubles or a sour disposition.

#### HOW TO SIT.

Settle into your seat ; do not drop, nor flop, nor bounce, nor plump into it. If the seat is an arm-chair, rest one hand lightly on the arm, and carry the head slightly forward in bending the body as it inclines toward the seat ; settle pliantly backward, touching the back of the chair at the waist-line first, and successively each joint in the articulations of the back until the neck is reached and the head falls easily into a restful attitude. Many well-meaning people make those about them feel uncomfortable by sitting rigidly erect like vestry deacons or court functionaries. To put others at their ease you should be at ease yourself. Sit in repose, the muscles relaxed ; do not energize the shoulders and limbs in bending forward as if you were built on a movable frame ; move with suppleness, letting your action be reflectively shown in all parts of the body.

#### HOW TO BOW.

In polite usage the pretentious formal bow is no longer decorous ; it has been superseded by the mere graceful

inclination of the body, bending slightly from the ankles; and this form prevails both on the platform and in the parlor. Out of vogue too is the familiar nod of the head in recognizing another. An inclination of the body is the genteel form of recognition, which has the merit of being graceful as well.

The agents of expression having been studied in detail, and the mechanical action of all parts of the body having been in a degree mastered, it has been found desirable to arrange an attractive series of mechanical movements which should call into play all the muscles of the body, and which should be practised in regular order to suitable music. In the first place, the music is inspiring and makes a pleasure out of what might otherwise seem a task; besides, it has the additional value of taking the pupil's mind away from himself and of allowing him to make the movements unconsciously, which is of the highest importance.

Every teacher will arrange his own order of what might perhaps be termed exhibitions illustrative of the underlying principles of the system; this will be based upon his own personal taste and experience, and must be executed with accuracy and precision, accustoming the class to rapid and true transitions from one movement or attitude to another, frequently varying the order of the transitions, that they



may be elastic both in mind and body, readily responding to any and all conditions of thought and expression.

A very good plan is to begin by practising the walk; select a quiet air by which the class can walk (not march) easily and naturally about the room. Let the music change to the air of "Home, Sweet Home," the walk changing to suit the music; let the whole body assume the attitude of reflection or concentration: the steps are taken very slowly, the weight lingering on the advanced foot, the back foot raised very gradually. Now let the music suddenly change to "The House is Haunted" or any similar air, which will enable the class to change the slow, concentric walk to that of secrecy and stealth; let the arms and body assume the attitude of attention or eagerness, take the steps cautiously almost on tiptoe; let each member of the class regard another with alternating expressions and gestures of secrecy, admonition, gentle warning, and coquetry; let the class move noiselessly about the room keeping step with the rhythm of the music. Now let the music change to "Amaryllis" or any minuet time; let every other one in the class join hand with the one in front, and move about the room to the stately time of the music, alternating the steps and attention outward, or at right angles, and then inward toward each other; then let the music change to the first movement, and so on;

"It can do no harm,  
poor thing"





this exercise will be found very attractive and very improving.

Numberless exercises can be devised for the arm movements, suiting the motions to whatever music may be selected, or *vice versa*. In our own work we have found it desirable to have the music specially composed and arranged to suit the action. The air of "The Shepherd Boy" can be followed very easily by starting with the weight first on the left leg; as the music begins let the body and right arm move right, the wrist carrying the hand, which is passive to the highest altitude; suddenly suspend, the body falling into normal position at the same time; let the movement flow rhythmically into the left side and suspend as before; finally take the movement up horizontally with both arms, bringing them back with control, to suit the music, and finishing with a little rotary motion of the hands; repeat this process by raising the arms directly in front of you, then repeat carrying them obliquely to the right and left; now repeat the entire process from beginning to end, only instead of suspending the arm when you have it raised to the highest altitude, reverse the wrist and bring the arm back with control, letting the movement flow through all the articulations of the arm and the movement of each arm be taken up instantly with the cessation of the other. A

little air called "The Flower Song" is very pretty for this exercise. If you like you can repeat this entire process by giving impulse to the movement from the upper arm instead of the wrist, letting a feeling of prostration gradually bring the arm back to its normal position. The process of writing the figure eight at different altitudes, as previously described, and what is sometimes termed the "feather movement" is very pretty practised to light music.

Next, practise the oppositions by arraying the class in rows across the further end of the room; let them advance to suitable music, first stepping forward with the right foot and simultaneously raising the left arm forward and the right arm backward; then step forward with the left foot and simultaneously raise the right arm forward and the left arm backward; let the steps and movements of the arm flow rhythmically one with the other; advance the class as far as the limits of the room will allow, and then let them retreat with the same movements. Now arrange a series of attitudes expressive of various sentiments or emotions, after the manner elsewhere described and illustrated in this book; don't compel every member of the class to assume the attitude just exactly alike; let each convey the idea in the way that is most characteristic and becoming to himself, that having been decided upon previous to the *ensemble* exercise. Select some music which consists

of a succession of chords; let the class assume the various attitudes and hold each through one or two bars of music; close the series with an attitude which will make a strong climax, such as the command "Go," or exaltation, resignation, or triumph.

## XVI.

## THE STAGE. — CONCLUSION.

WHO has not rapturously listened to a good storyteller! Who has not eagerly followed him word by word from rise to climax, and laughed at and heartily applauded the point! No matter apparently how indifferent the story itself may be, that is something we neither have time nor care to consider; we only know that it pleases us, but just how or by what means we do not stop to analyze, and we never discover until we hear the same story fall utterly flat, or lose half its charm on the lips of another; then we first realize that it was the storyteller, not the story, which most attracted us. How often the same is true of a play! We recall its name and the qualities of the well-remembered characters, and we are in the habit of ascribing the pleasurable sensations which accompany these recollections to the merit of the play itself; but what we recall, what really afforded us pleasure, was oftentimes only the charm of the actor's personality, and not any feature of the play at all. The proof of this



is seen when we witness the same play given with an inferior cast, and wonder what there was in that play that so interested us once. Herein is shown the soundness of the plea so generally advocated for the possession of unquestioned natural endowment in those who adopt the stage for their calling; and while the feasibility of cultivating natural gifts is not here denied, but on the contrary is strongly supported, no intelligent exponent of Delsarte will pretend that these gifts can be acquired or their absence supplied by any substitute, through any system of inculcation yet invented.

So the question resolves itself into a discussion of ways and means: given the natural or crude material, the problem is, how shall that material be made most available in the shortest time? Shall we have a systematic plan of study, as in the other arts and professions; or shall the student of the stage alone, of all students, be compelled to submit the development of his talents to the caprice of chance and irregular study, and be obliged to content himself with an empirical self-graduation in lieu of the diploma of proficiency honorably conferred by a recognized institution or qualified body?

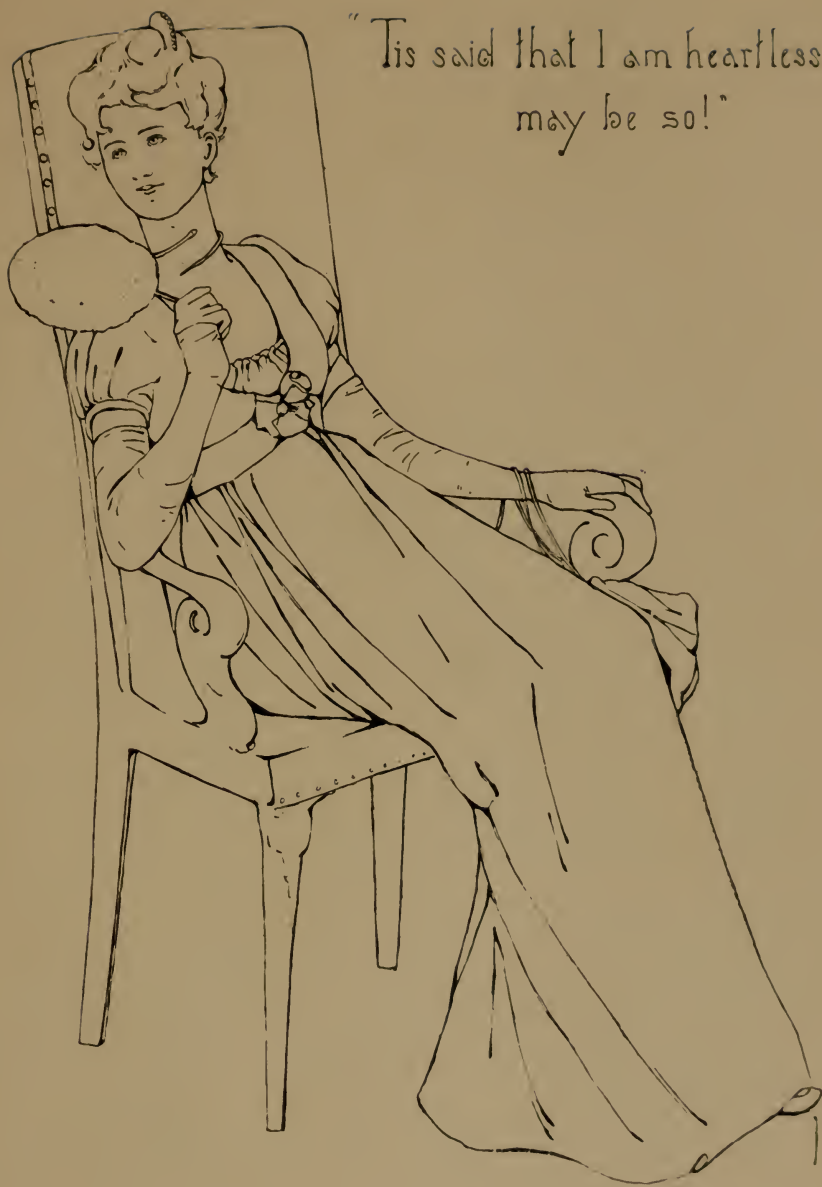
This is the question; and until it is answered, only the most masterful gifts can ever hope for complete expansion and recognition; the prize is inaccessible to many admi-

rably endowed who are debarred from the lists through purely circumstantial disqualifications, which are unknown to other artistic pursuits. Under the present conditions brass is more valuable than brains, and many who are destitute of that very useful attribute are shut out entirely in consequence.

This condition is especially lamentable in this day of marvellous accuracy in stage productions, when the public taste, grown fastidious through familiarity with the stage triumphs of master intellects, demands a greater and greater degree of proficiency in him who would win the highest honors. Once the actor was a vagabond; now he cannot succeed in the best sense of the term unless he is a gentleman. He must not only have the gift, but he must be able to make the best use of it. He must be interesting personally; and to be this requires something more than the possession of a good voice and presence and the ability to spout blank verse.

To be interesting demands the skilful exercise of the many subtle graces of mind and person which are more intuitive and inspirational than acquisitional. The modern school of acting appears to foster the growth of entertaining peculiarities in the individual, and to discard the perfunctory performance of the imitators of traditional models; and we recognize quaint portraitures of character

"Tis said that I am heartless;  
may be so!"





types to-day which would have been tabooed as blemishes less than a quarter of a century back.

It is a very simple matter to imitate that which is inferior to our own development; the difficult thing is to represent that which is superior. There is a wide distinction between a material and a mental differentiation of character. The former imitates the singularities of the person: it is objective or external; the latter illustrates peculiarities of the mind: it is subjective or internal. The one attacks the eccentricities of character from without, the other from within; the one studies an individual and photographs him; the other studies individuals of a class and reproduces a type. The one copies, the other creates. This distinction is aptly shown in the masterly psychological studies of Henry Irving, whose towering intellectual strength is able to sweep out of sight, or thrust into the background, the most striking of physical marks, leaving the mind to the undiverted contemplation of the wonderful creations of his genius.

Viewed from an artistic standpoint, the material side of our nature is antagonistic to the spiritual; and whichever of the two is in the ascendancy, or is predominant in our nature, that side overshadows and belittles the other. If the material or physical man is superior to the intellectual, then for art purposes the intellectual or spiritual man

is ineffectual ; because in the efforts of the spiritual to manifest itself, the presence of the material so completely dominates consciousness that the sense of the spiritual is obliterated.

In the domain of art, the function of the body is to reflect the soul ; it is the material expression of the immaterial part of us ; it is only when the intellectual holds an undoubted supremacy over the physical, as in the case of the famous artist named above, that we lose sight of the material altogether and enjoy a feast of the spirit.

This is the test of greatness ; those only are great who have so disciplined the body that it has become the servile creature of the soul, mirroring with equal truth its lightest fancies and its gravest thoughts, at the master's will.

This is the end ; to reach this end in the shortest possible time is the desideratum, and it is the *raison d'être* of countless theories, systems, and speculations, all of which contain elements of truth, and have contributed their quota to the sum of accumulated facts. To reach this end is of more importance to us than the means we shall employ to do it.

The possession of the thing is what we aim at, not the means of possessing it ; and having obtained the thing, we enjoy the possession without troubling ourselves about how we came into it. To learn to express what we feel



of human nature and know of human character, this is the primary consideration ; how or by what process of training we shall attain to this knowledge is a secondary matter ; but we must have training. No natural talent is sufficient of itself. No natural endowment can be exercised at its best without the discipline of experience to give it breadth and scope, and the wider the experience the broader the result. The most gifted among us must learn to know himself, as it is only through this knowledge that he can know others, and therefore know how to affect others.

Delsarte's philosophy of physical expression enables the student to analyze and classify his own motions and their corresponding emotions. It places expression on a sure and certain footing ; it makes the actor independent of his moods and delivers him from the thralldom of an untoward temperament. It enables him at will to put on the semblance of a feeling which he does not at the moment experience ; for has he not already analyzed it, and is he not familiar with its source and stop ? The real feeling cannot always be commanded at the moment when it is required, hence the necessity for a perfect simulation to preserve the illusion. Delsarte's methods are Nature's methods systematized for the purposes of art. When the formulæ of the Delsartian principles first reached this



country, they were seized upon by all manner of charlatans whose heralding of the "New System of Acting" and "Acting Made Easy" brought the subject into a disrepute from which it is but just emerging. From the announcements of these quacks one was given to understand that what Delsarte had discovered was a purchasable commodity, and that a term of twenty lessons with its dispensers would equip one with a supply of ready-made tragedy and compressed pathos which could be taken home, and, as it were, turned on at will. And the spirit of guileless, aspiring youth rose to an exuberant state. The result was a storm of "Juliets," "Ophelias," and "Melnottes" whose measured artificial woes carried unmeasured real distress to many innocent on-lookers.

These absurdities — which are scarcely exaggerated — become transparent when it is remembered that Delsarte's reasoning is in perfect accord with the best monuments of tradition, and with the results of the most enlightened research. It fully recognizes the fact that the artistic, like the poetic, temperament is essentially a matter of inheritance, not of study; that its promptings are intuitive, not volitional; and that while cultivation can do much to hasten development and expansion, it cannot supply the material to be developed and expanded. It may broaden and enlighten; it was never intended to originate or create.

"No tears can drown  
my passion of remorse"





This is all quite in keeping with Delsarte's teachings, which, while they recognize no school, prove their universality by comprehending all schools.

All great artists have been Delsartians, — unwittingly in most instances, but nevertheless in full sympathy with the opinions he disseminated. Most actors of note who work systematically pursue, sometimes without knowing it, his explicit directions for cultivating and economizing physical resources. An eminent tragedienne now residing in this country, in a conversation with the writer, disclaimed any knowledge of Delsarte, and in the next breath unconsciously avowed herself his stanch supporter by naming among the features of her daily practice physical exercises which are fundamental in Delsarte's system of mechanics; the reason for this is perhaps explainable in the tendency of broad and comprehensive minds to travel in similar channels, thus reaching the same destination, though going by different routes.

Other things being equal, the actor with a system has an infinite advantage over him who is without any. In preparing a character for representation on the stage, the former is able to keep constantly narrowing the plane over which his efforts are dispersed; from the universal and general going to the specific and particular, and by thus concentrating his thought, he effects an immense saving of

time and labor. He applies a few simple tests and ascertains to which class his character belongs ; knowing this, he is able to tell which of the three phases of the being is apt to predominate or rule, and the order of subordination of the other two. This enables him to disengage the salient traits and features of the character, and being already in possession of their corresponding outward equivalents, he gives prominence to them, sinking the others by contrast; thus his work is greatly simplified.

His methodless brother, on the other hand, is like the much-quoted rudderless ship; he is plunged at once into an infinite sea of doubt, where he is left experimenting and speculating, squandering his time and energies until some temporary harbor of thought is sighted in which he takes refuge. That student fails, however, to grasp the significance of Delsarte's labors in behalf of æsthetic science who imagines that a knowledge of the mere mechanics or the mere theory will suffice to give him command over his own resources in the interpretation of human character in art work.

No, this is not enough ; it is the thoughtful merging of the two. It is the idea, feeling, or emotion speaking through cultivated mediums that touches the subtlest chords of harmony. When it is remembered how much meaning can be conveyed by a timely and responsive

look, or a significant movement of the head or arm, what a language the perfected whole must speak! Our work will always bear the stamp of ourselves upon it; and just so much of head and heart as we put into that work, just so much will be reflected in the result. The creation can never be above the creator.

THE END.

















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